

ESSAYS IN MANUSCRIPT GEOGRAPHY

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ESSAYS IN MANUSCRIPT GEOGRAPHY

Vernacular Manuscripts of the English West Midlands
from the Conquest to the Sixteenth Century

Edited by

Wendy Scase



BREPOLS

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Essays in manuscript geography : vernacular manuscripts of the English West Midlands from the Conquest to the sixteenth century. - (Medieval texts and cultures of Northern Europe ; 10)

1. Manuscript preparation (Authorship) - England - West Midlands - History 2. Manuscripts, English (Middle) - England - West Midlands 3. Manuscripts, English (Old) - England - West Midlands 4. Manuscripts, Medieval - England - West Midlands 5. West Midlands (England) - Intellectual life

I. Scase, Wendy

091'094249

ISBN-13: 9782503516950

© 2007, Brepols Publishers n.v., Turnhout, Belgium

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D/2007/0095/103

ISBN: 978-2-503-51695-0

Printed in the E.U. on acid-free paper

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to The British Library, London, the Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp, and The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, for permission to reproduce materials in their care. The Manuscripts of the West Midlands Project, with which this volume and related conference are associated, was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The editor records her gratitude to Deborah A. Oosterhouse for her extremely careful copy-editing.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AMARC	Association for Manuscripts and Archives in Research Collections
ANTS	Anglo-Norman Text Society
<i>A-S Chronicle</i>	<i>Anglo-Saxon Chronicle</i>
Bede, <i>HE</i>	Bede, <i>Historia Ecclesiastica</i>
BL	British Library, London
Bodleian	Bodleian Library, Oxford
CCCC	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Medievalis (Turnhout: Brepols)
CUL	Cambridge University Library
EETS	Early English Text Society
<i>IMEV</i>	Carleton Brown and R. H. Robbins, <i>The Index of Middle English Verse</i> (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943)
IPH	International Association of Paper Historians
<i>IPMEP</i>	R. E. Lewis, N. F. Blake, and A. S. G. Edwards, <i>Index of Printed Middle English Prose</i> (New York: Garland, 1985)
<i>LALME</i>	Angus McIntosh, M. L. Samuels, and Michael Benskin, with the assistance of Michael Laing and Keith Williams, <i>A Linguistic</i>

	<i>Atlas of Late Medieval English</i> , 4 vols (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1986)
Lambeth	London, Lambeth Palace Library
MED	<i>Middle English Dictionary</i> , ed. by H. Kurath, H. M. Kuhn, John Reidy, and R. E. Lewis (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1952–2001)
MWM	<i>Manuscripts of the West Midlands: A Catalogue of Vernacular Manuscript Books of the English West Midlands, c. 1300 – c. 1475</i> (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2006), < http://www.mwm.bham.ac.uk >
PL	<i>Patrologiae Latinae, Cursus Completus</i> , ed. by J. P. Migne (Paris, 1841–73)
PRO	Public Record Office (The National Archives, Kew)
SBTRO	Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Record Office, Stratford-upon-Avon
TCD	Trinity College, Dublin

INTRODUCTION

ESSAYS IN MANUSCRIPT GEOGRAPHY

Wendy Scase

The move of book history to centre stage in literary studies offers medievalists particularly rich opportunities. In more complex ways than the printed book, the manuscript book is a diversely constituted material artefact spun in a web of material practices of production and reception. Vellum is prepared, ink is made, exemplars are procured, text is copied, pages are decorated, quires are bound, books are sold, borrowed, bequeathed, donated, and each individual person who contributes to this process has his or her own unique history which bears on the creation of the book. A manuscript book is thus the product of a unique community of producers and consumers, a community of which the book it produces will be, strictly speaking, the only instantiation and record. It is clear that this history of the manuscript book cannot be told without thick description of its geographies. Each aspect of manuscript materiality has both geographical and historical coordinates: the manuscript book is the product of a multitude of processes whose practice always has its own geographical as well as historical individuality. The history of the book does not yet provide models for analysing the manuscript book in this way, still less the tools and models needed for larger-scale work on groups of manuscripts. This book is an experiment in manuscript geography.

The genesis of this volume was a conference held at the University of Birmingham in April 2003 on Manuscripts of the West Midlands. The conference marked the beginning of a project at Birmingham, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, to catalogue the manuscripts listed in the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* under six West Midlands counties. The purpose of the conference was to gather together scholars to reflect on issues and practices in manuscript studies, and in particular on how practice might be informed by geographical parameters. Some of the essays in this volume are based on papers

presented at the conference. Other essays were commissioned later, and respond to or reflect on the online *Manuscripts of the West Midlands* catalogue (<<http://www.mwm.bham.ac.uk>>).

The manuscripts associated with the West Midlands afford excellent opportunities for experimental case studies. West Midlands English has long been regarded as a major dialect of Middle English. There is a canon of literary texts traditionally associated with post-conquest West Midlands production: the glosses of the Tremulous Hand of Worcester, the *South English Legendary*, *Ancrene Wisse* and the Katherine Group, *Lazamon's Brut*, *William of Palerne*, *Piers Plowman*, *Winner and Waster*, John Mirk's *Festial*, John Trevisa's translations, John Audelay's religious lyrics, to name but a few. Interest and confidence in vernacular literature are also attested by the copying of texts and the making of books in the region. Many of the most important Middle English manuscripts are associated with the region, for example, Bodleian, MS Digby 86, BL, MS Harley 2253, and Bodleian, MS Eng. poet. a. 1 (the Vernon manuscript). As Ralph Hanna has recently pointed out, the 'ancient diocese of Worcester' was a 'distinguished' centre of 'English literary activity and promulgation' continuously from Anglo-Saxon times.¹

The Manuscripts of the West Midlands project is one of several recent experiments in deploying geography in new ways as a principle of analysis. Richard Beadle's 'Prolegomena to a Literary Geography of Later Medieval Norfolk' tests the potential of extending the concept of a regional dialect to that of literary production.² Beadle's study was explicitly written in response to the publication of the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Middle English*, but its idea of literary geography may perhaps be traced to Elizabeth Salter's influential concept of interdisciplinary 'mappings', used in her publications and in her teaching at York, where Beadle was a postgraduate student. (David Lawton has recently noted that in this Salter was 'well ahead of the "cartographic turn"'.)³ While Beadle's 'geography' consists in

¹ Ralph Hanna, *London Literature, 1300–1380* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 2.

² In *Regionalism in Late Medieval Manuscripts and Texts: Essays Celebrating the Publication of 'A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English'*, ed. by Felicity Riddy, York Manuscripts Conferences: Proceedings Series, 2 [Proceedings of the 1989 Conference] (Cambridge: Brewer, 1991), pp. 89–108.

³ David Lawton, 'Mapping Performance', in *New Medieval Literatures*, vol. VI, ed. by David Lawton, Rita Copeland, and Wendy Scase (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 1–9 (pp. 2–3).

mapping texts onto a region, the Imagining History Project at Queen's University Belfast (directed by John Thompson, another York graduate) aims 'to develop a methodology for mapping the ways in which early book history intersects with ideas of the past in the late medieval and early modern period', by mapping the networks within which the manuscripts were produced and read. This project 'prioritises traffic and transition over location'.⁴ Ralph Hanna's work, by contrast, emphasizes the importance of location. In a recent survey he describes 'trying to link books with their specific (almost by definition local) literary communities' as an important way to take forward the vision of 'medieval books as a cultural phenomenon' opened up by the 1981 York conference on 'The Literary Implications of Manuscript Study'. He notes that institutional communities have provided tractable studies for such analysis, and many are now 'mapped and analysed with greater precision than heretofore'.⁵ His recent study *London Literature, 1300–1380* tackles the much more difficult task of describing 'the polyvocal and individuated voices of discrete local/regional literary cultures', experimenting to this end with the sources for London.⁶

The essays in this volume seek to approach manuscripts and groups of manuscripts from the perspective of their association with the West Midlands. They do not adopt any single model of manuscript geography, but identify and explore some of the ideological investments of traditional regionalist accounts of vernacular literary culture, and propose new theoretical and methodological approaches to contextual study. The volume is arranged in four parts. The first three parts offer cases studies of particular manuscripts and groups of manuscripts; the fourth part is concerned with the kinds of research methodologies and tools which we need to support further research, and the uses to which such tools might be put.

Part One focuses on the period from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, and on Worcester and the Worcester diocese. Elaine Treharne is one of several contributors in this volume who takes a corpus of manuscripts as the focus for her research. Her corpus is manuscripts containing English produced in the second half of the eleventh century. The majority of these codices was produced at (or with a provenance of) one of two centres: ten at the monastic foundation of Worcester, and eleven at the secular cathedral of Exeter; statistically these centres

⁴ <<http://www.qub.ac.uk/imagining-history/wordpress/index.php>> (accessed 18 July 2006).

⁵ Ralph Hanna, 'Analytical Survey 4: Middle English Manuscripts and the Study of Literature', in *New Medieval Literatures*, vol. IV, ed. by Wendy Scase, Rita Copeland, and David Lawton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 243–64 (pp. 248, 244, 249).

⁶ Hanna, *London Literature*, p. 3.

were 'the leading vernacular manuscript producers of their day'. Some of these manuscripts are the 'major witnesses to texts composed earlier', and previously scholarship has often been interested in these late Old English manuscripts as evidence for the origins of the works they contain. Treharne however prefers to view the late manuscript as a 'material artefact of some significance reflecting its own intellectual and cultural milieu'. Comparing the corpora of Exeter and Worcester books she asks what they can reveal about their 'particular cultural, political, and historical contexts'. The corpus-based approach leads to new insights about institutions and the impact of individuals, in particular the influence of Bishop Leofric of Exeter and Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester (d. 1095), as well as to conclusions about the meanings and uses of vernacular books in this period.

Mary Swan examines Old English manuscripts produced in a slightly later period: the late eleventh to the early thirteenth centuries. Noting the tradition of localizing such manuscripts at Worcester, she asks us to consider a more dynamic geographical model that recognizes possible movements and mobility of books, scribes, and readers. As she notes, such possibilities make localizing manuscripts problematic: a hand or dialect may indicate where a scribe was trained rather than where he wrote his book, or where that book was used. And it is to evidence for mobility of books and readers that Swan looks to revise and complicate our picture of manuscripts associated with Worcester. Noting evidence for the importation of books from other regions for reformatting and circulation in the Worcester region, Swan demonstrates how we may make a 'mental map of textual production'.

One of the manuscripts that Mary Swan adduces as evidence for 'Old English textual activity' in the West Midlands of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries is London, Lambeth Palace, MS 487. This manuscript of the 'Lambeth Homilies' includes writing with a debt to the Anglo-Saxon prose texts of Ælfric and Wulfstan (d. 1023). Swan hypothesizes that this manuscript demonstrates the use of texts available in the cathedral or monastic libraries of the West Midlands, adapted for a new audience — possibly a female recluse, or for lay readers. The same West Midlands manuscript is one of two manuscript foci in Bella Millett's essay. Noting that Lambeth 487 shares material with Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B. 14. 52 (335), a late twelfth-century manuscript from the east Midlands, and a common interest in combining the style of 'university' sermons with material from the Anglo-Saxon prose tradition, Millett postulates that the two manuscripts must emanate from a broad, perhaps interdiocesan, movement of pastoral reform which in the Worcester diocese generated both the Lambeth homilies and the *Ancrene Wisse* group of texts. She prefers to postulate a cathedral sermon audience rather than private readers as the intended audience for the

Lambeth manuscript, but agrees with Swan (and Treharne) that the making of such books manifests forward-looking appropriation of Anglo-Saxon texts rather than nostalgic or antiquarian book-making.

The essays in Part Two focus on early fourteenth-century Shropshire and its (surprisingly widespread) regional links. Two essays focus on the much discussed — though still puzzling — early fourteenth-century manuscript from the Ludlow area, Harley 2253. Susanna Fein outlines some pressing problems and possible new approaches to the procedures and practices of the scribe-compiler that have broad implications for our knowledge of book making and use in the West Midlands in the early fourteenth century. She observes that manuscript scholars are ‘archival archaeologists and anthropologists’ whose study of the material traces of actual or intended use can lead to greater understanding of the social and economic infrastructures supporting such a production. Such material evidence would include the scribe’s adaptations of the beginnings and endings of works. Studying one sequence of texts in detail, Fein finds that an overriding principle appears to be that of recitation and performance in a multilingual setting. However, Fein argues, much remains to be discovered about the relations of the book to this kind of setting. We need studies of how the scribe handles the varied Midlands dialects of his source texts, and consideration of how texts that voice the discontent of the poor and ill-educated would have been received by socially aspirant Francophone readers. Such studies might bring us closer to understanding the relations between the oral/aural features of many of the texts, and the production and use of the book itself — which does not seem to have been used for performance.

Carter Revard uses palaeographical and codicological evidence to try to unravel the early history of the Harley 2253 scribe-compiler’s activity, and to examine how the plan suggested there plays out in the rest of his part of the manuscript. He notes that the scribe appears to have begun with the acquisition of four quires of biblical and other pious narratives, including lives of the patron saints of Ludlow churches, the location of the scribe. The scribe did not write these quires, but he did rubricate them himself — probably at about the time he started to write his own portion of the manuscript. (Features of the rubricator’s hand correspond with those of documents in the scribe’s hand dated in the early 1330s.) His first text seems to have been the *Vita Sancti Ethelberti* (now quire six, fols 53^r–54^v), like the texts he had rubricated, the life of an important local saint. The intervening quire, quire five, suggests Revard, constitutes a ‘metanarrative’ of his plan for his own part of the anthology. The inclusion here of the *ABC à femmes* identifies women as part of the intended audience for the manuscript. The ‘Debate of Summer and Winter’ signals that a principle of organization is to be

pairings of contraries. This plan is played out in quire six, which is ‘a sequence of pairings: saintly vs. sinful, the worldly vs. spiritual’.

Staying with manuscript production in the first half of the fourteenth century, John J. Thompson models a literary geography that is alert to the relations between regions and problematizes our understanding of regional literary culture. He reminds us what is invested in studies with geopolitical parameters. He also reminds us that just as regions and regional communities do not exist in isolation, so literary production cannot be simply mapped onto regions but needs to be related to the dynamics of cross-border relations. To illustrate these points, Thompson shows that manuscripts traditionally viewed as of the West Midlands — Harley 2253, BL, MS Royal 12. C. XII — form a context for the production of BL, MS Harley 913, a manuscript containing early fourteenth-century Hiberno-English items. Harley 913 has attracted much speculation regarding its place of production and first readership. The manuscript’s cultural affiliations mirror the linguistic affiliations of Middle Hiberno-English, shown by McIntosh, Samuels, and Benskin to be similar to those of the south West Midlands of England. Thompson suggests that the interests of powerful West Midlands families in Ireland provide a social and economic framework for literary production and exchange. The manuscript includes the Latin poem edited by Wright as ‘On the Venality of Judges’, and the A-version of the Middle English lyric ‘Earth upon Earth’. The Ludlow scribe of Harley 2253 copied the only other surviving copies of these texts.

With Part Three the focus shifts to the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, to Warwickshire, and to later antiquarian interests. Ryan Perry’s essay focuses on a manuscript that includes many vernacular texts, the Clopton manuscript which is associated on heraldic grounds with William Clopton, member of the Beauchamp affinity in the early fifteenth century. Now dispersed as three manuscripts in three different locations, the Clopton manuscript originally included, among other things, a C-text of *Piers Plowman*, *Mandeville’s Travels*, *Handlyng Synne*, and the *Estoire del Evangelie*. Perry reframes the questions of selection and organization of such codices, preferring to ask not what principles inform the contents and their arrangement, but what social and administrative networks made the exemplars available to the compiler. Like Swan on the post-conquest period, Perry is interested in the geographical networks that may lie behind the manuscript, and is able to layer his account of geographical dynamics with a finely textured analysis of social relations, thanks to the plentiful sources and studies by social historians relevant to this manuscript. Examining the affinity of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, he hypothesizes that this well-studied example of an administrative

and social network might also have provided a network for textual dissemination and consumption. He demonstrates that the exemplars behind the Clopton manuscript could well have been circulating within or accessed through the Beauchamp household and its networks among religious houses and noble and gentry relations (in the West Midlands and beyond). He suggests that this is a manuscript copied, and decorated, largely from Midlands exemplars in London (noting Simon Horobin's view that scribes in London seem to have copied regional dialects *literatim*). He proposes an analysis of the cultural practices thus inferred in terms of gift-giving and exchange, suggesting that exchanges of books may have strengthened social ties, and that the dissemination of texts has a genealogical dimension that may have strengthened social understandings of genealogy.

Genealogy and the genealogies of texts are the focus of Martha W. Driver's essay, which is also about the Beauchamp family. Studying genealogical and heraldic rolls, Driver focuses on visual representations of the history of the Beauchamp and Neville families of Warwickshire in the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Like Perry and Swan, Driver uses the concept of networks to context these materials, though the networks that interest her in this essay are noble and aristocratic. She suggests the complex networks and affiliations associated with the production and use of manuscripts by aristocratic Midlands families in the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Borrowing Howard Bloch's notion of a 'family's "practice of signs"', she discusses both what these representations were for, and what they can tell us about an aristocratic family's access to the arts of manuscript production. The Beauchamp Pageants manuscript (BL, Cotton MS Julius E. IV) was made for Anne Neville, Countess of Warwick (1426–93), widow of Richard Neville (d. 1471), and daughter of the fifteenth Earl of Warwick, whose own daughter Anne married Richard III. Made in the mid-1480s, the Pageants manuscript depicts, in text and line images, events in the life of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick and father of Countess Anne Neville. The Pageants identify the Earl with the Lancastrian side. The Rous rolls, heraldic rolls of arms attributed to John Rous (1411–91), chantry priest to the Earl of Warwick, may have also been made for the Earl's daughter with the intention of promoting her restoration to royal favour. Whereas the Beauchamp Pageants 'appear to have been made, at least in part, in an urban centre' and may have continental models, and be the work of an artist trained in the Netherlands, the drawings in the Rous rolls may have been produced locally, perhaps within the aristocratic household.

Driver demonstrates that the commissioning of the rolls has precedents in the book-owning and use of the Beauchamps. Richard Beauchamp, himself an amateur poet, commissioned a poem from John Lydgate, owned books of French and

English literature, and retained John Shirley, the London scribe and publisher. His daughter by his first marriage, Margaret, commissioned Lydgate to write the life of Guy of Warwick, fictionally the ancestor of the Beauchamps. Two copies of this work were made by John Shirley. Margaret may have owned other books that contain poetry by Chaucer and Lydgate. Henry Beauchamp, son to Earl Richard by his second wife, Isabella, is associated with several illuminated rolls and manuscripts, some of them containing miniatures that are possibly the work of the 'Fastolf Master', who coincided in Rouen with the Beauchamps. Such is the evidence for 'a highly developed intellectual network, tied further by blood, of male and female readers who appreciated both secular and religious books', and having a 'wide range of connections' among scribes and artists. One channel for connections with continental artists was the building of the Beauchamp Chapel, for artists from the Netherlands and Germany are known to have been employed to paint the statues there.

David Griffith extends this investigation of the Rous rolls down to the nineteenth century. He traces a tradition of antiquarian interest in the rolls that goes back to their creator himself, John Rous. Griffith investigates the motivations behind continued interest in the rolls and reproduction of them. He rejects the possible explanation that 'disinterested antiquarianism or scholarship' is sufficient to account for this tradition. One motivation, he argues, was to authenticate an unbroken pedigree across the calamitous disruptions of the Reformation which caused the destruction of so many monuments to the past. A key role in this project was played by members of the College of Heralds, with individual heralds collecting resources and making copies of medieval materials, sometimes for the purposes of tracing the lineages and rights of individuals, and sometimes for more ambitious projects such as county histories. Tracing the ownership and knowledge of the Rous rolls from the sixteenth century, the essay provides materials towards a history of the emergence of geographical perspectives in manuscript history and bibliography.

The three essays in Part Four reflect on large-scale, corpus-based approaches to cultural geography of the later period in relation to the online catalogue *Manuscripts of the West Midlands*. Rebecca Farnham describes the making and scope of the online catalogue and outlines its functions. Alison Wiggins' essay on romance in the West Midlands draws on the lists of manuscripts used for the project, returning us to questions about the uses of texts in the medieval period but addressing them in relation to large-scale manuscript study and questions of inter-regional networks. She identifies seventeen romance manuscripts that are associated with the West Midlands, analysing their features in relation to the corpus of

c. 106 surviving romance manuscripts. Methodological problems notwithstanding (especially the difficulties of distinguishing the provenance of a text and the provenance of copies of it) she concludes that there was vigorous interaction between the West Midlands and London and the south-east, in marked contrast to relations between the West Midlands and the north. Within the corpus there is much diversity (partly perhaps enabled by these cultural links and the ready availability of a range of texts). Romances are associated with a variety of readers and uses. Moreover, there is no 'regional romance' as such, in the sense of texts dealing with the landscapes of the area. Judging by the dialect evidence of the manuscripts, the one romance that features Midlands locations, Guy of Warwick, was not confined to or perhaps even obviously popular in the region. Tellingly, region only seems to become significant when it is linked with family interests. Here Wiggins puts the Beauchamp family's use of texts, studied by Driver in relation to reputation building, into a wider, comparative framework. Margaret Beauchamp's commission of a life of Guy of Warwick from Lydgate and a French prose version produced for John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, were, she suggests, both intended to promote the interests of the Beauchamp household in noble and royal circles.

The final essay in the volume, by Orietta Da Rold, also takes a corpus-based approach to the study of textual culture. Da Rold is particularly interested in problems of writing surfaces, and in this essay she announces a pilot study as a preliminary to a new corpus-based approach to the study of paper in manuscripts. She suggests that the use of paper in medieval English manuscripts is underestimated. Of the c. 162 manuscripts studied for the West Midlands manuscripts catalogue, she observes, some thirty include paper. The use of paper in medieval manuscripts, she argues, is deserving of more detailed and systematic study than it has hitherto received. Da Rold draws attention to the promise of the *codicologie quantitative*, a method of systematic, large-scale manuscript codicology pioneered by Carla Bozzolo and Ezio Ornatò, and by the methodologies used in the bibliography of the early printed book, where research on paper has developed rapidly. We need, she argues, a catalogue of paper used in medieval English manuscripts, a database of paper 'fingerprints' that would enable the identification and dating of paper in manuscripts. The data required are not simply watermarks, but other physical measurements, and their relation with other production features such as quiring, text, and scribal stint. The correlation of such data across manuscripts, Da Rold suggests, would not only provide more evidence for dating of manuscripts, but should also provide material for many other studies — for example, studies of scribal collaboration and other working habits, and relations between manuscript books.

The contributors to the volume were invited to reflect on methodologies as part of their essays in manuscript geography. In keeping with this self-reflective and experimental spirit, the volume closes with an epilogue which reflects on the agenda of the project and the achievement of the essays in relation to it. In his epilogue, Derek Pearsall situates the volume in a tradition and identifies some possible future geographically inflected projects that might build upon it.

Part One

From the Eleventh Century to the Thirteenth Century

BISHOPS AND THEIR TEXTS IN THE LATER ELEVENTH CENTURY: WORCESTER AND EXETER

Elaine Treharne

Among early medievalists, there is a genuine appreciation of the fortuitousness of manuscript survival: a realization, particularly with regard to the poetic corpus, of how remarkable is the literature that remains from the eighth to the twelfth centuries. Juxtaposed with this, however, is an implicit scholarly response that privileges the poetic over the prose, the named-author prose over the anonymous, and the 'original' over the copied and adapted.¹ For the significant body of manuscripts and texts that lies at the bottom of this aesthetic heap — the considerable range of codices containing second- or third-generation religious prose works — there is still a great deal to be done before scholarship legitimizes and receives positively these witnesses to the phenomenon of the vernacular in late Anglo-Saxon and early Anglo-Norman England.

It has become relatively easy to take for granted the production of Old English; the survival of the extensive body of literature touching on all aspects of contemporary thought, perception, event, and action. The impetus for the creation and recording of literature in the vernacular is attributed largely to Bede, with the marginalized English rendition of his Latin account of *Cædmon's Hymn*; King Alfred and his late ninth-century educational programme to ensure the translation into English of key historical, philosophical, and religious works; and the

¹ See, for example, *Desire for Origins: New Language, Old English, and Teaching the Tradition*, ed. by Allen Frantzen (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1990); and Clare A. Lees, *Tradition and Belief: Religious Writing in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, *Medieval Cultures*, 19 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), especially chapter 1.

Benedictine Reform generally, especially through the activities of Æthelwold and Ælfric. It becomes easy to describe the creation and copying of English texts, whether prose or poetry, as a manifestation of some notional 'traditionalist' impulse, an interpretation based almost entirely on the identification of the *precedent* of vernacular production at particular Anglo-Saxon scriptoria. There is a privileging of originality such that where there is a history of English textual production, it is the primary witnesses that take precedence over the presence of other, later copies or adaptations. We tend to see a codex copied from earlier material as a witness to its antecedent textual genesis, and not as a representative per se of contemporary interests and needs: a material artefact of some significance reflecting its own intellectual and cultural milieu.²

Two good cases in point are the English products of the scriptoria of Worcester and Exeter, operating at the same time in the very late Anglo-Saxon period.³ This paper will focus initially on a broad comparison between the two in the mid- and second-half of the eleventh century, and then concentrate more closely on a small selection of books from each cathedral that demonstrate similar methods and purposes behind their production. The aim is to determine the respective impetuses behind manuscript production in English, the contexts, and the consequences of textual compilation in each of these places.

The lengthy episcopacies of Wulfstan (II) at Worcester (1062–95) and Leofric at Exeter (1050–72)⁴ are critical periods of diocesan stability through the turmoil

² This can be very well illustrated, for example, by Julia Barrow's comment (in 'Wulfstan and Worcester: Bishop and Clergy in the Early Eleventh Century', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference*, ed. by Matthew Townend, Studies in the Early Middle Ages, 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 141–59, at p. 156) that 'Wulfstan [II]'s father, Æthelstan, occurs as priest and monk in the list in Wulfstan of York's homiliary (Bodleian, MS Hatton 113), as does a brother called Byrcstan who remained a layman'. Hatton 113 is dated to s. xi², and could not be Wulfstan of York's homiliary, as he had been dead for about forty years when it was put together for Wulfstan II (St Wulfstan), Bishop of Worcester. Hatton 113 could, of course, have been based on an exemplar made for Wulfstan I, but one might wonder how this might be proven.

³ Whether or not Exeter had an actual scriptorium in these decades — one that belonged to the cathedral chapter, rather than being the bishop's writing office — is a point raised in the work of Elaine M. Drage, 'Bishop Leofric and the Exeter Cathedral Chapter, 1050–1072: A Reassessment of the Manuscript Evidence' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1978); and analysed again, with a different conclusion, in Elaine M. Treharne, 'Producing a Library in Late Anglo-Saxon England: Exeter 1050–1072', *Review of English Studies*, 54 (2003), 155–72.

⁴ The see was moved to Exeter from Crediton in 1050. Leofric had been bishop at Crediton from 1046 to 1050. He had been at Edward the Confessor's court prior to his promotion to a

occasioned by the Norman Conquest and its immediate aftermath. While we have considerable primary material for building up a picture of Wulfstan's life, career, and achievements,⁵ there is nothing similar for Leofric, whose importance has, until recently, been undervalued in comparison with that of his Worcester peer.⁶ John of Worcester reveals about Leofric that 'After [Lyfing's] death the bishopric of Crediton and Cornwall was soon given to the king's chancellor, Leofric the Welshman'.⁷ William of Malmesbury provides the further information that Leofric had been brought up and educated in Lotharingia, and that he 'expelled the nuns from the monastery of St Peter and established his bishopric and canons there. In the fashion of [Lotharingia] but contrary to English custom the canons were to eat in one dining room and sleep in one dormitory'.⁸

bishopric. Leofric and the books of Exeter have been the focus of considerable scholarly attention in recent years; chief among these is P. W. Conner, *Anglo-Saxon Exeter: A Tenth-Century Cultural History* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1993), and P. W. Conner, 'Exeter's Relics, Exeter's Books', in *Essays on Anglo-Saxon and Related Themes in Memory of Lynne Grundy*, ed. by Jane Roberts and Janet Nelson, King's College London Medieval Studies (London: King's College, Centre for Late Antique and Medieval Studies, 2000), pp. 117–56. Other studies include Treharne, 'Producing a Library'; R. Gameson, 'The Origin of the Exeter Book of Old English Poetry', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 25 (1996), 135–85; and Joyce Hill, 'Anglo-Saxon Scholarship and Viking Raids: The Exeter Book Contextualised', *Revue de Philologie*, 25 (1998), 9–28. Of fundamental importance for any study of Exeter in the eleventh century is Drage, 'Bishop Leofric and the Exeter Cathedral Chapter'; and T. A. M. Bishop, 'Notes on Cambridge Manuscripts, Part II; Part III: MSS Connected with Exeter', *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society*, 2 (1954–58), 185–99, especially pp. 192–99; and Pierre Chaplais, 'The Authenticity of the Royal Anglo-Saxon Diplomas of Exeter', in his *Essays in Medieval Diplomacy and Administration* (London: Hambledon, 1981), chapter 15, original pagination pp. 1–37. See also Elaine Treharne, 'The Bishop's Book: Leofric's Homiliary and Eleventh-Century Exeter', forthcoming, which discusses in detail the codicology of BL, Cotton MS Cleopatra B. XIII, London, Lambeth Palace, MS 489, and CCCC, MSS 419 and 421.

⁵ Of which William of Malmesbury's Latin translation of the Old English *Life of Wulfstan* written by Coleman is the most important. See William of Malmesbury, *Saints' Lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract*, ed. and trans. by M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁶ For Leofric, see Frank Barlow, 'Leofric (d. 1072)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16471>>.

⁷ 'Cuius post decessum, regis cancellario Leofrico Brytonico mox Cridiatunensis et Cornubiensis datus est presulatus'. *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, 2 vols, ed. by R. R. Darlington and P. McGurk, trans. by J. Bray and P. McGurk (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), II, 542–43.

⁸ William of Malmesbury, *The Deeds of the Bishops of England (Gesta Pontificum Anglorum)*, trans. by David Preest (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002), p. 134. Note that Preest's n. 2 at p. 134

Whereas Leofric introduced the *Rule of Chrodegang* and the ordered life of regular canons to Exeter, further north, Wulfstan seems to have been in the process of monasticizing what had been a partially clerical and partially cenobitic life at Worcester.⁹ While Wulfstan's accomplishments as both the abbot of a monastic house and bishop of a busy diocese are traceable through his books, his *vita*, and other documentary sources, Leofric's activities and the success of his episcopal performance can be gauged only from scant surviving evidence. The fact that Leofric has no extant *vita* — nor was he canonized — does not imply that he did not function to the immense benefit of his diocese during his lifetime, but it is likely that his contemporaneity with Wulfstan has assisted in scholarship's under-evaluation of the former's merits.¹⁰

Of immediate interest, then, for a survey of the work and responsibilities of a late Anglo-Saxon bishop in the years surrounding the Conquest is the manuscript production at their cathedrals, and particularly an investigation of the books that can be most closely associated with the bishops themselves. The extant manuscripts produced in the period 1060–80 at Exeter and Worcester, both vernacular and Latin,¹¹ show numerous similarities, which suggest that the work and pastoral agenda of

incorrectly attributes the donation of books to Exeter Cathedral, including the Exeter Book, to Lyfing, when the credit should be Leofric's. Leofric's Lotharingian connections and influences are the subject of Erika Corradini's PhD research in progress at the University of Leicester on 'Leofric and Eleventh-Century Exeter'.

⁹ See, for example, Barrow, 'Wulfstan and Worcester', pp. 149–51.

¹⁰ Indeed, his generous donations to the cathedral, his significant personal book collection, and his maintenance of the see despite the rebellion in Exeter against William the Conqueror in 1069 all indicate that this was a prelate with considerable political and intellectual finesse. See further the references in note 4 above. Exeter clearly did not possess the public relations expertise of Worcester, which was adept at glorifying its own and sustaining the legacy of its greatest bishops.

¹¹ This survey will focus exclusively on vernacular manuscripts, because such book production marks out these dioceses at this time. Other known places where English books were made at this time include Christ Church, Canterbury. For lists of manuscripts, see Richard Gameson, *The Manuscripts of Early Norman England (c. 1066–1130)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 1999); Helmut Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001). See also Teresa Webber, *Scribes and Scholars at Salisbury Cathedral, c. 1075–c. 1125* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); and Teresa Webber, 'Script and Manuscript Production at Christ Church, Canterbury, after the Norman Conquest', in *Canterbury and the Norman Conquest: Churches, Saints and Scholars, 1066–1109*, ed. by Richard Eales and Richard Sharpe (London: Hambledon, 1995), pp. 145–58.

both prelates broadly correspond (despite Leofric's Lotharingian upbringing and secular establishment, and Wulfstan's English education and monastic cathedral).

Manuscripts containing English with a Worcester origin or provenance datable to after the middle of the eleventh century include the following:

Ker¹²	Shelf-Mark	Contents	Date
343	Bodleian, Laud Misc. 482	Penitential	s. xi ^{med-2}
53	CCCC 265	Confessional; laws	s. xi ^{med-2}
192	Cotton Tiberius B. IV	<i>A-S Chronicle</i>	s. xi ^{med-2}
23	CUL Kk. 3. 18	Bede, <i>HE</i>	s. xi ²
60	CCCC 322	Gregory, <i>Dialogues</i>	s. xi ²
64	CCCC 367	<i>Visio Leofrici</i>	s. xi ²
67	CCCC 391	Prayers, Prognostics	s. xi ²
331	Bodleian, Hatton 113/114	Homilies	s. xi ²
338	Bodleian, Junius 121	Ecclesiastical Instit.	s. xi ²
190	Cotton Tiberius A. XIII	Homily	s. xi ^{ex}

Those English manuscripts copied at Exeter in the eleventh century are the following:

Ker	Shelf-Mark	Contents	Date
50	CCCC 201	Theodulf, <i>Capitula</i>	s. xi ^{med?}
45B	CCCC 190	Ecclesiastical Institutes	s. xi ^{med-2}
17	CUL Hh. 1. 10	Ælfric, <i>Grammar, Glossary</i>	s. xi ²
281	Lambeth 427	Kentish Saints' Lives (frag.)	s. xi ²
19	CUL Ii. 2. 4	<i>Pastoral Care</i>	s. xi ^{3/4}
20	CUL Ii. 2. 11	Gospels	s. xi ^{3/4}
46	CCCC 191	<i>Rule of Chrodegang</i>	s. xi ^{3/4}
47	CCCC 196	<i>Martyrology</i>	s. xi ^{3/4}
144	Cotton Cleopatra B. XIII	Homilies	s. xi ^{3/4}
232	BL Harley 863	Canticle gloss	s. xi ^{3/4}
283	Lambeth 489	Homilies	s. xi ^{3/4}

A number of attributes are noticeable from the most cursory glance at these lists: the parity of the numbers of manuscripts produced in English; and the comparability of texts. Both facets of English textual production may simply be the result

¹² Item numbers and dates and dating conventions in N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957; repr. with supplement, 1991). The abbreviation 'Cotton' refers to the Cotton Collection at the BL.

of chance survival, but even so these codices are probably reasonably representative of what was copied. It may not seem odd that two episcopal writing offices were compiling manuscripts of, very loosely, the same general type, but Worcester and Exeter are ostensibly different kinds of establishment with different functions: one, a monastic cathedral with a very long history of textual production and reception in England, where the revitalized monasticism of Wulfstan may well have closed doors to the laity and to monastic pastoral work outside the walls of the foundation;¹³ the other, a recently refounded secular cathedral staffed by canons, with either no provable history of manuscript production or a history of a long-defunct scriptorium, but where, one might imagine, the religious were engaged in regular and wide-ranging pastoral work among a lay congregation.¹⁴ However, in relation to Exeter, there is no surviving evidence at all to suggest that the English manuscripts made at that institution were created by, created for, or used by the canons themselves in the pursuit of their duties. Furthermore, no other contemporary secular institution — given the nature of extant manuscripts — was engaged in anything like Exeter's programme of copying substantial numbers of English texts. This makes Exeter's output unique within its specific historical, cultural, and political context, and suggests the focal point must be the erstwhile Bishop, Leofric.¹⁵ Likewise, Worcester's achievement in producing significant quantity of vernacular material at this time is singular, and at the heart of the programme is its Bishop, Wulfstan.

A crude count of codices and fragments (but not diplomatic materials) yields seventeen manuscripts extant from all scriptoria other than Worcester and Exeter.¹⁶ Well over half the manuscripts (twenty-two) that survive from *c.* 1060

¹³ And it is pastoral work with some notional and homogeneous laity that is usually given as the supposed purpose of vernacular homilies and other religious texts. See further, *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century*, ed. by Mary Swan and Elaine Treharne, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 30 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), especially Treharne, Irvine, and Swan in that volume.

¹⁴ See Gameson, 'Origin of the Exeter Book', and Conner, 'Exeter's Relics, Exeter's Books', for these different views.

¹⁵ See further, Treharne, 'Producing a Library'.

¹⁶ Seventeen other manuscripts survive from the second half of the eleventh century (not including charters or other diplomatic materials, or manuscripts dated to mid-century): CUL, MS Additional 3206, Eccles. Law (frag.), s. xi²; CCCC, MS 198, Homilies, some of s. xi²; Canterbury, Cathedral Library, MS Additional 20, *Rule of Chrodegang* (frag.), s. xi², Christ Church; Durham, Dean and Chapter, MS B. IV. 24, *Rule of Benedict*, s. xi², Durham provenance; Gloucester homilies, Gloucester, Cathedral Library, MS 35 (frag.), s. xi¹⁻²; Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS

to c. 1080 originate in Worcester or Exeter. What one cannot say, of course, is if manuscripts now lost to us would have further enhanced the proportional output of western scriptoria, or whether those that survive from Worcester and Exeter represent a high number of those manuscripts originally produced. These extant books may have remained relatively intact at the Dissolution of the monasteries, when other institutions' repositories were broken up and dispersed. Even so, the institutions represented by the localization of extant English codices from the second half of the eleventh century are Exeter (11), Worcester (11), Christ Church, Canterbury (2), Kent (1), Abingdon (1), Gloucester (1?), Durham (provenance 1), Winchester (1), York (1). This leaves nine manuscripts currently unlocalized and unprovenanced. Put another way, despite the dispersal and loss of a large number of manuscripts, Worcester and Exeter are clearly, in terms of today's surviving books, the leading vernacular manuscript producers of their day.

While number crunching is undoubtedly interesting for the resulting statistics, it is of very limited use in determining an accurate picture of English manuscript production as a whole. The paucity of evidence for the localization of numerous volumes, the dangers of over-reliance on dating, and the difficulty of interpreting patterns of textual transmission mean one can only ever achieve a patchy picture. And it is less the statistics and more the interpretation of the extant manuscripts that can provide a clearer understanding of the contexts of their production and use.

Here, then, Worcester and Exeter come into their own, particularly when it is almost certain that some of the volumes produced were a result of an individual's own needs and agenda. The manuscripts contain works that are copies of pre-existing exemplars, either by Wulfstan I (d. 1023) or Ælfric, or, in a few cases, anonymous authors. Some of the manuscripts, such as Hatton 113 and 114 and Junius 121, are the major witnesses to texts composed earlier; in this instance, it is Wulfstan's works manifested in this codex that make it such an important testimony to the dissemination of his homiletic and legal tracts; it is this manuscript that forms the basis for Bethurum's and Napier's critical editions.¹⁷ Of less

298, Hexateuch (frag), s. xi²; BL, MS Additional 34652, *Rule of Chrodegang* (frag.), s. xi²; BL, MS Arundel 60, Psalter Gloss, s. xi², New Minster, Winchester?; BL, MS Burney 277, Laws (frag.), s. xi², Kentish provenance; BL, Cotton MS Caligula A. XV, Computistica, s. xi², Christ Church; BL, Cotton MS Faustina A. X, Ælfric's *Grammar*, s. xi²; BL, Cotton MS Tiberius B. I, Orosius, *Chronicle*, s. xi¹⁻², Abingdon; BL, MS Royal 15. B. XXII, Ælfric's *Grammar*, s. xi²; W. Merton homily (frag.), s. xi²; Bodleian, MS Auct. F. 4. 32, Homily, s. xi² (?), Glastonbury; Bodleian, MS Laud Misc. 509, Pentateuch, s. xi²; York, Minster Library, MS 1, documents, s. xi¹⁻², York.

¹⁷ *The Homilies of Wulfstan*, ed. by Dorothy Bethurum (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957); *Wulfstan: Sammlung der ihm zugeschriebenen Homilien nebst Untersuchungen über ihre*

interest to scholars, though, is the actual milieu of this manuscript and its contemporaries. That is, the manuscripts copied in the second half of the eleventh century are investigated less for the production and use of Old English in its precise time, and more for what they tell us about the texts' authors within those authors' own time.¹⁸ This raises important questions about the manner in which scholars treat the evidence that is extant for a study of vernacular literature: that again, we privilege the origins rather than the duplication and adaptation of material to the extent that we skew the data, obfuscating particular cultural, political, and historical contexts and undermining the role of the literature itself.

Hatton 113 and 114 and Junius 121, probably compiled early in St Wulfstan's prelacy, constitute his own penitential and homiliary and seem to have been created as a single collection, because, as Ker points out, their quire signatures are sequential;¹⁹ Cotton Cleopatra B. XIII, Lambeth 489, and CCCC, MSS 419 and 421 constitute Leofric's equivalent set of essential vernacular texts.²⁰ Both of these sets of manuscripts can be compared to determine the methods of and resources available for their compilation, and can give a clear indication of an important part of a bishop's textual needs in the second half of the eleventh century.

Junius 121 and Hatton 113 and 114 contain, in summary, the following texts:²¹

Echtheit, ed. by A. S. Napier, *Sammlung englischer Denkmäler in kritischen Ausgaben*, 4 (Berlin, 1883). For an excellent series of essays on Wulfstan and his achievements, see *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York*, ed. by Townend.

¹⁸ See, for example, the discussion of the manuscripts discussed here in the various essays in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York*, ed. by Townend.

¹⁹ Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, items 331 and 338, pp. 391–99 and pp. 412–18.

²⁰ CCCC 419 and 421 probably originated at Christ Church, Canterbury, but were acquired by Exeter, where a number of texts were added to the collection. Treharne discusses these in detail in 'The Bishop's Book', as does Erika Corradini in her doctoral thesis on Leofric. As such, Cleopatra B. XIII and Lambeth 489 will form the focus here.

²¹ Hatton 113 and 114 and Junius 121 are treated as a single codex under the siglum T by Pope, in *Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection*, ed. by John C. Pope, EETS, o.s., 269, 260 (London: Oxford University Press, 1967–68), pp. 70–77; by Godden in *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series: Text*, ed. by Malcolm Godden, EETS, s.s., 5 (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. li–liv, and by Clemons in *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The First Series: Text*, ed. by P. Clemons, EETS, s.s., 17 (London: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 41–45, upon whose description the synthesis above is mostly based. For a facsimile and description of the manuscripts, see *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts in Microfiche Facsimile*, vol. VI: *Worcester Manuscripts*, ed. by Christine Franzen (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1998).

Junius 121:

- Fols 9^r–25^v. Items 1–4, *Institutes of Polity* (1–21)
- Fols 25^v–42^r. Items 5–10, Wulfstan I, legal texts (including *Canons of Edgar*)
- Fols 42^r–55^r. Poetic versions of Gloria, Creed, Paternoster, psalms (1–50)
- Fols 55^v–57^v. Translation of a chapter of Amalarius's *De regula canonicorum*
- Fols 57^v–61^v. Items 13–15, Wulfstan II, *Polity* and homilies
- Fols 61^v–101^r. Items 16–25, confessional and penitential texts
- Fols 101^v–130^v. Items 26–28, three Pastoral Letters by Ælfric
- Fols 130^v–137^v. Items 29–30, two homilies
- Fols 138–60. Items 31–35, four added Ælfric homilies and one composite.

Hatton 113 and 114:

- Fols i–xi. Early additions including a letter, prayers, calendar, computus tables, table of contents
- Fols 1–115^v. Items 1–32, Wulfstan I or pseudo-Wulfstan homilies and three Ælfric homilies
- Fols 115^v–140^r. Items 33–58, *Temporale* items from Christmas to Pentecost, many by Ælfric
- Fols 140^r–230^r. Items 59–75, *Sanctorale* items, the majority from Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies*.
- Fols 230^r–246^v. Items 76–78, three added homilies, two by Ælfric.
- Fols 1–4^v, fol. 247 (of Hatton 114). Items 82–85, contemporary homiletic additions, three by Ælfric.

The three manuscripts comprise an extensive teaching and preaching tool, put together in its initial form over a period of time from a variety of sources²² by a single scribe. This denotes a scriptorium staffed with sufficient scribes to permit one to be dedicated to a single task over time: indeed, this appears to be a relatively competent and confident scribe, who is something of an editor of the material being copied.²³ Within the volumes is a mixture of what might be considered the

²² *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies II*, ed. by Godden, pp. lii–liii. Godden describes it as being compiled from 'diverse origins', one source for some items being CCCC, MS 178, an earlier eleventh-century manuscript with a Worcester provenance.

²³ This editorial activity manifests itself in a number of ways, such as syntactic alteration (usually switching the main and auxiliary verbs around), phonological and other orthographical changes (*hy-hie*, for example), inflexional levelling, particularly of dative *-um* to *-an* or *-en*, the omission of the verbal prefix *a-* (in *arisan* or *acweccan*, for instance), intratextual lexical alteration (so, *wordum* for *spræcum*, *gesucon* for *gesicton*, *getrymde* for *gestrynde*, *drihten* for *god*, *gimmas* for

best available texts by Wulfstan and Ælfric, intermingled with composite homilies and other anonymous texts. The nature of this penitential and homiletic collection changed in later years, as additions by a number of hands indicate a rapid (if not vast) expansion of the materials in the anthology that include an Ælfric homily for a Confessor (item 76), and one for a Dedication of a Church (item 77). These *quando volueris* items supplement the many other texts for non-specified occasions in the manuscripts,²⁴ which might well be considered of greatest use to a bishop required to preach for a multitude of events, as his schedule allowed.

Malmesbury's *Vita Wulfstani* and *Gesta pontificum anglorum* both illustrate the numerous activities undertaken by a committed prelate. In relation to Wulfstan's preaching, Malmesbury states that 'all [Wulfstan's] life the fame of his preaching did so move the people that you might see them assemble in multitudes wheresoever they heard that he was to dedicate a church. He himself gladly sought occasion of preaching — and ever spoke of Christ, ever set Christ before his hearers.'²⁵ While Wulfstan's devotion to preaching, general piety, and miraculous abilities might be remarkable, his episcopal duties overall were, presumably, relatively typical. Chief among these were that 'he visited his diocese diligently, gave baptism to any children that were yet unbaptized, and exhorted the people to faith and good works'.²⁶ At the dedication of a church, an event of which Wulfstan seems rarely to have tired, Malmesbury reveals that 'his sermon, though saying much on other topics, had been mainly about peace. Some people, who were enemies in bitter quarrels, were touched by his words and forgave each other'. To the man who would not be similarly reconciled, Wulfstan said, 'In the Gospel our Lord said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the

gymstanas), and finally, minor rhetorical flourishes added, such as 'eall toslopen' becoming 'eall toswollen and toslopen'. See, for example, the lists of variants in the apparatus in Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies I*, ed. by Clemoes. Many of these features are very common in Old English manuscripts in the later eleventh and twelfth centuries and indicate a conscious linguistic updating of the exemplar. See, for example, Elaine Treharne, 'Reading from the Margins: The Uses of Old English Homiletic Manuscripts in the Post-Conquest Period', in *Beatus Vir: Essays in Memory of Phillip Pulsiano*, ed. by A. N. Doane and K. Wolf (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), pp. 329–58.

²⁴ Such as those at fols 1–115 in Hatton 113. See Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies II*, ed. by Godden, p. li.

²⁵ William of Malmesbury, *Vita Wulfstani*, I, xiv.

²⁶ William of Malmesbury, *Vita Wulfstani*, I, xv. Malmesbury comments also on Wulfstan's attendance at the Shire Court and his care for the sick (I, xv).

sons of God”.²⁷ But Wulfstan also preached of the outcome for sinners if they continued in their evil ways,²⁸ and all of these elements of his social and moral concerns are depicted in the face-to-face contact between prelate and people related by William of Malmesbury, providing a personal insight that is often easy to overlook when analysing homilies as a homogeneous literary corpus. Indeed, within those texts contained in Junius 121 and Hatton 113 and 114 are a number that reveal that the ideals of Wulfstan are depicted in his *Vita*.²⁹ The manuscripts, then, both reflect Wulfstan’s concerns and provide pertinent preparatory reading materials for this devoted Bishop, who, it might be added, was also lauded for his ability to extemporize when preaching, and thus presumably had a good stock of memorized texts for all occasions.

Such a general occasion, of course, was the episcopal ceremony for dedicating a church. Wulfstan seems to have travelled widely through his diocese, dedicating new buildings and refoundations.³⁰ Leofric, too, seems to have undertaken this part of his duties enthusiastically, and both bishops conveniently had at their

²⁷ *Deeds of the Bishops of England*, trans. by Preest, p. 191.

²⁸ William of Malmesbury, *Vita Wulfstani*, I, xvi: ‘Wulfstan, good, gentle, and kindly though he was, spoke not smooth things to the sinners, but rebuked their vices, and threatened them with evil to come.’ Any one of the homilies by Wulfstan I would offer excellent admonitory exempla, including his text on the imminence of Antichrist’s advent (*Homilies of Wulfstan*, ed. by Bethurum, Ib, contained in both Hatton 113 and Junius 121), and the famous *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* in Hatton 113 (*Homilies of Wulfstan*, ed by Bethurum, XXc). Interestingly, in the case of the latter, the date of its original context is uniquely made explicit: ‘In dies Æþelredi regis’ and there seems to be a well-developed sense of history. For example, at line 40, ‘syððan Eadgar geendode’ indicates a writer who imagines the state of affairs to have been getting gradually worse since the end of Edgar’s reign in 975.

²⁹ In Ælfric’s *Catholic Homilies* I, for example, the final part of the *Passion of St Stephen* is an extensive discussion of forgiveness and love between neighbours. *Ælfric’s Catholic Homilies* I, ed. by Clemoes, pp. 203–04. Such didactic elements are the bread-and-butter of homiletic literature. In addition, various foibles of Wulfstan are also reflected in his penitential-homiletic collection: his documented abhorrence of long hair worn by men (William of Malmesbury, *Vita Wulfstani*, I, xvi), which he would cut himself with ‘a little knife with which he used to cut his nails and scrape blots from books’, is reflected in the inclusion in Junius 121 of the *Canons of Edgar*. Canon 20 enjoins men to ensure their hairstyle is appropriate. See further the excellent essay by Mary Clayton, ‘An Edition of Ælfric’s *Letter to Brother Edward*’, in *Early Medieval English Texts and Interpretations: Studies Presented to Donald G. Scragg* ed. by Elaine Treharne and Susan Rosser (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2003), pp. 263–83 (pp. 269–73).

³⁰ See, for example, Emma Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester, c. 1008–1095* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), chapter 7.

disposal a number of appropriate sermons for the dedication of churches. Indeed, in these general terms, Wulfstan's homiliary shares much of its textual make-up with Leofric's homiliary, Cotton Cleopatra B. XIII and Lambeth 489. These latter manuscripts contain a number of homilies by Wulfstan I and Ælfric, both for specific occasions and for more general festivals and ceremonies, and including a number of varying texts for the dedication of a church.³¹

What is immediately apparent in an analysis of the contents of these books is that Wulfstan's homiliary, while similar in type to Leofric's, is much more extensive in scope, including a far broader range of core Ælfric and Wulfstan I homiletic material. This indicates that Wulfstan felt it necessary to have a significant range of variable texts for the implementation of his numerous pastoral duties and that the variety of exemplars at his disposal was considerably greater than Leofric's. Worcester had a well-established library by the time of Wulfstan's ascendancy to the bishopric; among its manuscripts were those closely associated with Wulfstan I, the homilist and statesman, such as BL, Cotton MS Nero A. I, possibly originating at York, and passed to Worcester. Worcester also owned earlier copies of Ælfric's homiletic texts that may have been sent directly to Worcester from Ælfric's own scriptorium at Cerne Abbas or Eynsham.

For Leofric, other than a miscellany of poorly kept service-books, there was little else at Exeter when he transferred the see to that foundation from Crediton. His collection of manuscripts was therefore started from close to nothing and was compiled from a variety of exemplars, which, judging by the textual limitations of Cleopatra B. XIII and Lambeth 489 were relatively scarce.³² His achievement is the more extraordinary in this sense: he had created for himself from scarce resources and minimal beginnings a small collection of volumes that provided reasonable preaching material covering a range of church festivals.

³¹ Cleopatra B. XIII contains an anonymous homily on Judgement Day, Ælfric's homily for the second Sunday after Easter, and his *De initio creature*; Wulfstan's homilies for the dedication of a church and on Luke, a coronation oath, a homily for the fifth or sixth Sunday after Easter, fragments of Wulfstan texts, and Ælfric's *Paternoster* and *Creed*. In Lambeth 489, the texts include Ælfric homilies for the nativity, for Easter Sunday, and for All Saints, one of Wulfstan's general sermons, a number of composite homilies comprised of portions of Ælfric, and two sermons for the dedication of a church. See further, Trebarne, 'The Bishop's Book' and the references contained therein.

³² And which Bethurum (*Homilies of Wulfstan*, p. 352) surmises may have been comprised of scraps: 'It looks as if the scribe of [Cleopatra B. XIII], or his model, had in hand incomplete — or at least unpolished — materials of Wulfstan [I]'s and had then filled them out with scraps from the archbishop's sermons elsewhere available.'

The nature of the respective manuscripts' production, as well as their range, is also quite different. While Wulfstan's manuscript set was copied, as discussed above, by one competent scribe for the most part, at Exeter, the situation was very different and, it seems, rather more frenetic, since no fewer than nine scribes completed the work, with higher estimates by some scholars.³³ This suggests the work was commissioned with a haste that would be entirely understandable given the lack of texts available to Leofric.

Both Leofric's and Wulfstan's own homiliaries thus provide an insight into the respective resources of the libraries at Exeter and Worcester, and moreover, throw significant light on the kinds of materials the bishop or his manuscript director felt were essential. Within the broader context of the overall manuscript production at these sees in this third quarter of the eleventh century, the similarities and differences in the nature of the manuscripts prove interesting too, shedding light on the importance given over to the vernacular at precisely the time when one might expect to see its diminution as a literary language resulting from the pervasion of continental influences prevalent during the run up to, and aftermath of, the Norman Conquest.

What both sets of homiletic manuscripts have in common is the clear requirement for English material not necessarily organized according to the Church year. Hatton 114, it should be noted, does demonstrate systematic internal structuring according to homilies for saints' days, and for non-*sanctorale* occasions, but has *quando volueris* additions at the end. Clemoes notes that 'Manuscripts carefully arranged in relation to the order of the church year (except those made up of saints' lives) are characteristic up to the middle of the eleventh century. After that miscellanies, including the substantial anthologies T, B, and C, are typical'.³⁴ This important observation illustrates that by the second half of the eleventh century compilers' requirements were not for blanket coverage of the chronology of the Church year, but rather for a pool of readily adaptable material for preaching and teaching.

The role of preaching — its frequency, its audience, and its delivery — is something of an unknown quantity not only within Anglo-Saxon England, but also much later in the medieval period. Anglo-Saxonists have, not unreasonably, adopted with enthusiasm the only substantial piece of evidence available to them: Ælfric's own statements about the purpose of his oft-copied *Catholic Homilies*. In

³³ See Treharne, 'The Bishop's Book'.

³⁴ *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies I*, ed. by Clemoes, p. 162.

his well-known Latin Preface to the First Series of *Catholic Homilies*, Ælfric, addressing Archbishop Sigeric, notifies him that ‘We have placed forty pieces in this book, believing this to be sufficient for the faithful for a year if they are recited to them in their entirety in church by the ministers of God’.³⁵ The implications of this are transparent enough: virtually weekly preaching in the vernacular to the laity in church, presumably by parish priests, was Ælfric’s intention, at least in the writing of his first set of homilies. However, the reforms to be implemented through his translations seem not to reflect the reality of eleventh-century pastoral work, if surviving manuscripts are to be believed. For the books that exist do not generally adhere to Ælfric’s established textual sequence, particularly after the mid-eleventh century: they mix Ælfric material with other texts of varying genealogy;³⁶ many manuscripts do not bear witness to a methodical *temporale* or *sanctorale* sequence;³⁷ and, perhaps most importantly of all, they do not — at any time or in any discernible way — indicate ownership or use by parish priests, or, in fact, by anyone other than those at the upper echelons of the Church hierarchy. Indeed, one could take this further in relation to the eleventh century, and arguably the tenth:³⁸ it is only bishops or senior ecclesiastical figures that we know of as owning or being associated with these vernacular homiliaries and analogous codices.³⁹ Even when later annotation or marginalia occur to demonstrate the reading and probable use of the manuscripts, the person responsible seems to be a senior religious figure at work, such as Coleman, the Prior of Worcester and Abbot of Westbury-on-Trym.⁴⁰ As chancellor to Wulfstan II, Coleman may have

³⁵ *Ælfric’s Prefaces*, ed. by Jonathan Wilcox, Durham Medieval Texts (Durham: Department of English, 1994), p. 127.

³⁶ Such as Wulfstan’s homiliary outlined above.

³⁷ Such as Leofric’s homiliary discussed here.

³⁸ One can argue the points following for the later tenth or eleventh century, but not for the twelfth, because contexts of use and production alter dramatically, and current scholarship is only now beginning to evaluate the importance of the indigenous vernacular, c. 1100–70. See further the essays in *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century*, ed. by Swan and Treharne.

³⁹ Figures like Ælfric, Wulfstan I and II, and Ælfwine, who owned the famous prayerbook, BL, Cotton MSS Titus D. XXVI and XXVII, for example.

⁴⁰ As can be illustrated by the appearance of Coleman’s disguised signature in Hatton 113 and 114, entered at about the time when he would have become chancellor to St Wulfstan, and then abbot of the refoundation of Westbury. See N. R. Ker, ‘Old English Notes Signed “Coleman”’, in his *Books, Collectors and Libraries: Studies in the Medieval Heritage*, ed. by Andrew G. Watson (London: Hambledon, 1981), pp. 27–30.

scoured the homiliaries for texts for the Bishop's use, and indeed, given what we know of Wulfstan's preaching about peace and reconciliation, it is very interesting to note Coleman's marginal annotation remarking on the text, 'Be ðam ðe men sceolan forgivan swa swa hi wyllað þæt godd forgive heom', in Ælfric's First Series homily on St Stephen.⁴¹ His annotations, though, might also indicate his own revision for preaching, since, as the *Vita Wulfstani* makes clear, Coleman sometimes preached on behalf of Wulfstan, much to the relative dissatisfaction of his audience.⁴² Preaching by anyone other than the bishop might itself have been the cause of complaint, as it seems to have been regarded as a responsibility of the bishop alone.⁴³ Such a mandate in the eleventh-century English Church would go a long way to explaining how it is that homiliaries might belong to those in episcopal, and possibly abbatial, positions.

What Leofric, Wulfstan, and the other compilers, writers, and users of these manuscripts undoubtedly needed, then, was material that permitted them the textual wherewithal to preach and teach whenever they were able. In the case of Leofric, this might not have been that regular an occurrence, if the surviving material is any indication, or as is more likely, he may well have repeated material within a variety of extemporized performances. For Wulfstan, we are told in the *Vita Wulfstani* that when he was Prior, 'on every Sunday and on all great festivals he poured [into the people's] ears the counsels of salvation'. The two sets of homiletic manuscripts provide plenty of evidence of the kinds of activities undertaken by the Bishop. Moreover, Wulfstan's penitential texts in Junius 121 evince his requirement for a considerable number of regulatory texts to fulfil his confessional and punitive duties.

Both Wulfstan and Leofric thus seem to have placed very great importance on acquiring vernacular religious materials for the successful completion of their own duties. This pursuit is not merely a matter of these bishops' own sense of adherence to the time-honoured English customs at a time of political upheaval, as many scholars tend to describe it in a response that foregrounds passivity and traditionalism⁴⁴ over innovation and proactivity. Instead, one should see the

⁴¹ '[This is] about those people who should forgive just like they desire that God might forgive them.' The Old English is printed in Ker, 'Old English Notes Signed "Coleman"', p. 29. See also note 29 above.

⁴² See Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, p. 173.

⁴³ William of Malmesbury, *Vita Wulfstani*, I, viii: 'To the bishop alone it belonged to preach, because he alone by the power committed to him could absolve the people from sins.'

⁴⁴ See, for example, Gameson, *Manuscripts of Early Norman England*, p. 25.

emphasis on English at this senior level of the English Church in the West Midlands and south-west as an eminently pragmatic concern to maintain standards of pastoral care and to safeguard the salvation of the congregations of the Worcester and Exeter dioceses.

Emma Mason's comment on Wulfstan's safe-guarding of his community — that consequently it 'was not at the forefront of intellectual development at that time'⁴⁵ — depends on our seeing the continuation of English as something rather consciously archaic, particularly when compared to then-current innovation in Latin manuscript production. But this is to provide a false comparison, since English manuscript production had never directly paralleled that of Latin. Copying English, in itself, represents the deliberately resistive ideology of those involved, and in this respect, one should regard this as a proactive politics of vernacularity, recognizing the importance of the vernacular as a tool for maintaining stability at a turbulent time. Such ideology is as much present in the texts that are copied as in their manner of production: the cognizant cultivation of careful and aesthetically pleasing codices evinced in both Worcester and Exeter manuscripts of this period;⁴⁶ the careful selection of pertinent texts that seek to maintain high levels of piety at precisely the time when the loss of Anglo-Saxon hegemony was attributed to the sins of the people.⁴⁷ And all of this was quite deliberately fostered by bishops who were also able statesmen, providing stability and reassurance for their flock while negotiating their relationship with the new monarchy.

Thus, these bishops' books, once released from their status merely as various recensions of original Old English, reveal a considerable amount about scriptoria, about literary and intellectual resources, about preaching practices, and, potentially, about the reaction to cultural upheaval. But, in particular, it is what they reveal about individual ownership, about two of the last Anglo-Saxon bishops — Wulfstan and Leofric — that is so important. Their own highly developed sense of responsibility makes them and their manuscripts crucial witnesses to the specific business of politics and practice of Old English.

⁴⁵ Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, p. 206.

⁴⁶ See, further, Drage, 'Bishop Leofric and the Exeter Cathedral Chapter', and Elizabeth McIntyre, 'Early Twelfth-Century Worcester Cathedral Priory, with Special Reference to the Manuscripts Written There' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1978).

⁴⁷ For which see William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, for example.

MOBILE LIBRARIES: OLD ENGLISH MANUSCRIPT PRODUCTION IN WORCESTER AND THE WEST MIDLANDS, 1090–1215

Mary Swan

Introduction

This essay dovetails chronologically with that in this volume by Elaine Treharne, and it too explores the commonly held assumption that Worcester was producing a large quantity of Old English texts even in this late period, and in particular that Worcester is the precise place of production of these texts. It will open with a critical survey of work done to date on different aspects of the historical and literary climate of the West Midlands from the end of the eleventh century to the early thirteenth, with a focus on what might be extrapolated from this work about such late Old English manuscript production in this area, and about what major questions have so far not been addressed. Some individual manuscripts will then be considered for what they might indicate about precisely where such late Old English textual production is happening, and — the key question — why.¹

¹ My thinking on the topics covered in this essay has been greatly advanced by conversations with Elaine Treharne, and also with Bella Millet, and by Christine Franzen's work on Worcester manuscripts in *The Tremulous Hand of Worcester: A Study of Old English in the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), and in her introduction to *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts in Microfiche Facsimile*, vol. VI: *Worcester Manuscripts* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1997) (hereafter referred to as '*Worcester MSS*'). Since this essay was written, a useful overview of aspects of manuscripts associated with Worcester has been published in Richard Gameson's 'St Wulfstan, the Library of Worcester and the Spirituality of the Medieval Book', in *St Wulfstan and his World*, ed. by Julia S. Barrow and N. P. Brooks (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 59–104. Gameson tracks the sorts of books, in Latin and English, which might have been in Worcester Cathedral Library at different points from c. 1040 to c. 1130. The other essays

West Midlands Textual-Intellectual Climate

One striking feature of work done to date on the textual-intellectual climate of the West Midlands at this period is what might be called Worcester's centripetal force: the fact that it seems to function as the default location for modern scholars wishing to identify a West Midlands place of production for a given manuscript. This Worcester prominence is not just a recent phenomenon: throughout the later Anglo-Saxon period, Worcester's senior ecclesiastics and their hagiographers were highly skilled at positioning Worcester at the centre of the textual-intellectual life of the West Midlands. After the Conquest, and especially under Wulfstan II, as Treharne reminds us in her essay, it is possible to discern a specifically Worcester-focused promotional drive to reinforce the perception of the importance and marked identity of the place, especially in terms of its developed and carefully constructed sense of English identity. By the Dissolution, Worcester Cathedral housed a large number of Old English manuscripts, even though not all of them originated there. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that modern scholars, influenced by these factors, have tended to ascribe Old English manuscripts with West Midlands links to Worcester first of all; sometimes without considering other possible locations.

If we move back a century or so before the start of the period central to this essay, we can see that Worcester's tenth-century self-promotional manoeuvres gave it strong and interesting links with other places in the West Midlands and beyond. Westbury-on-Trym was Oswald's *parochia*, and he moved monks from it in the earlier part of the 960s to found Ramsey and Winchcombe. By Wulfstan II's time Westbury's church was in need of repair, and Wulfstan had it rebuilt and staffed with monks and made Coleman its prior. Coleman was Wulfstan's chancellor, the author of his Old English *Life*, and reportedly of at least a small part of a translated Old English *Life of Gregory* too,² and — particularly

in *St Wulfstan and his World* provide very useful insight into aspects of Wulfstan's career and of the physical, political, and institutional life of Worcester Cathedral during his episcopacy.

² William of Malmesbury records this in his *Vita Wulfstani*. See William of Malmesbury, *Saints' Lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract*, ed. and trans. by M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 30: 'Licet enim michi de beati Gregorii uita dictum mutuari, quod a Colemanno in patriam linguam ut pleraque alia uersum, ego transfudi denuo in Latinum' ('I may adapt a phrase from the life of Blessed Gregory which, turned into his native language by Coleman (as were many others), I have translated anew into Latin'). Winterbottom and Thomson note that the phrase in question is from Paul the Deacon's *Vita Gregorii* (William of Malmesbury, *Saints' Lives*, ed. and trans. by Winterbottom and Thomson, p. 31, n. 4). William's claim is also noted by Elizabeth A. McIntyre, 'Early Twelfth-Century Worcester Cathedral Priory, with Special Reference to the Manuscripts

interesting for the purposes of this essay — a habitual writer in the margins of Old English manuscripts.³ Westbury was shut down by Bishop Samson, Wulfstan's successor, in the late eleventh or early twelfth century. Oswald also established St Mary's Worcester after Ramsey, somewhere between 966 and 977, and staffed it with monks from Ramsey. In the 970s, during what is rather imprecisely known as the 'antimonastic' reaction after the death of King Edgar, and more accurately identified as a response by some lay landholders to what they perceived to be the appropriation of their lands by reformed Benedictine communities, the Ramsey community moved to Winchcombe for a time.

Wulfstan II, then, inherited Oswaldian links and also devised new ways for Worcester to establish and maintain its influence in the West Midlands and beyond, by setting up various monastic networks at whose centre it positioned itself. One such network was the confraternity association probably established just before 1077,⁴ whose members included the Abbots of Evesham, Chertsey, Bath, Pershore, Winchcombe, and Gloucester; Worcester also entered into a confraternity agreement with Ramsey soon afterwards. Another of Wulfstan's connections was with Robert, Bishop of Hereford 1079–95, who was trained in Continental scholarship, and under whom it is reasonable to suppose that Hereford would have had a well-equipped library. Robert's links with Wulfstan include one explicitly manuscript-related transaction: he gave Wulfstan a copy of the chronicle by the Irish monk Marianus Scotus, which Wulfstan then had edited and updated.⁵

These links of foundation, movement of communities, and political or personal networks all imply also the movement of texts.⁶ It is hard to imagine that the

Written There' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 1978), p. 137. I am very grateful to Ralph Hanna for alerting me to this reference, and to William Flynn and John Anderson for assistance with the Latin translation. The tantalizing implication that Coleman might have been translating into Old English a collection of sayings, at least some of them drawn from Paul the Deacon's *Life of Gregory*, or the whole of Paul the Deacon's *Life of Gregory*, is not clarified any further by William.

³ On Coleman, see Joyce Hill, 'Ælfric's Silent Days', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s., 16 (1985), 118–31 (pp. 120–22), and W. P. Stoneman, 'Another Old English Note Signed "Coleman"', *Medium Ævum*, 56 (1987), 78–81.

⁴ See Emma Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester c. 1008–1095* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), pp. 197–200. The text of the agreement which defines this confraternity survives in a later copy.

⁵ Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, pp. 121–22.

⁶ Gameson, 'St Wulfstan', p. 84, notes the reference in William of Malmesbury's *Life of Wulfstan* to Wulfstan supplying Westbury-on-Trym with service books. See William of Malmesbury, *Saints' Lives*, ed. and trans. by Winterbottom and Thomson, p. 120.

monks who moved from Westbury to Ramsey under Oswald's direction to set up the new house did not bring books with them; or that books did not travel from Ramsey to Winchcombe and to Worcester too. If, as Emma Mason suggests,⁷ Wulfstan's motive in setting up the confraternity network was to encourage solidarity amongst Anglo-Saxon abbots in the West Midlands and to draw some of their new, Norman peers into association with them, then this network too might have led to manuscripts being swapped, loaned, or consulted for copying amongst the institutions involved

It has been amply shown in recent years that certain places in the West Midlands seem interested in preserving things English and pre-Conquest through the late eleventh and twelfth centuries. Treharne's essay in this volume describes elements of Worcester's part in this under Wulfstan II, and it is generally accepted, as Ralph Hanna reminds us, that Worcester carried on promoting English texts, and especially pre-Conquest ones, into the twelfth century and reading them, at least, into the early thirteenth.⁸ Elizabeth McIntyre notes the good number of marks of use — glosses, corrections, additions — in manuscripts believed to have been in Worcester Cathedral Priory at this date,⁹ and of course the Tremulous Hand is the most famous example of this sort of activity a century later.¹⁰

Evesham had a chequered relationship with Worcester in the eleventh century, and particularly under its Abbot Ethelwig from 1058 to 1077, but, like Worcester under Wulfstan, Evesham under Ethelwig promoted things Anglo-Saxon,¹¹ and as with Worcester, there is no reason to assume that this stopped at the end of the eleventh or early in the twelfth century, or that it did not include the production and use of Old English texts. The sorts of confraternity links Worcester established in the latter part of the eleventh century might well, also, have encouraged some of the other institutions involved to produce and use Old English texts, both

⁷ Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, p. 197.

⁸ Ralph Hanna, *London Literature, 1300–1380* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 2. See Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, p. 199, on evidence for small numbers of new French-identified members of West Midlands monasteries, and for the suggestion that these institutions might have retained some of the identifying features of pre-Conquest reformed English Benedictine monasticism.

⁹ McIntyre, 'Early Twelfth-Century Worcester Cathedral Priory', pp. 216–23.

¹⁰ See Franzen, *The Tremulous Hand*.

¹¹ Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, p. 205, notes that Ethelwig promoted the cults of insular saints, including Cuthbert, Aidan, and Ceolfrith, at Evesham, and also that monks from Evesham were active in the revival of monasticism in Northumbria.

for practical liturgical and pastoral purposes and for study, during and beyond the lifespan of the confraternity itself.

From the eleven or so surviving Old English manuscripts containing homilies and hagiography which were written between the early twelfth and the early thirteenth centuries,¹² only three are thought to have been written in the West Midlands,¹³ but several of the others, and also a good number of earlier Old English manuscripts which are not thought to have been written in this area, are believed to have arrived here by the twelfth century.

As many other essays in this volume remind us, manuscript location is rarely an exact science: identifiers such as script style or dialect are often what lead scholars to propose precise places for the production of manuscripts, but there are different ways to interpret these identifiers. A particular script style may originate in one place, but scribes trained there might go on to practice elsewhere too; dialect markers might show where a scribe was brought up, not where they are writing, or they may be carried over from a source-text, and so on. Most detailed work on location by script style or language is done on texts such as imaginative works of literature, or preaching texts, which are likely to be very movable, transmissible and usable across a very wide area. Work on charters is much more reliable in this respect, since texts of this type are much less likely to be produced or used outside the broad area to which they refer.

One excellent example of the use of charters to determine textual location is Peter Kitson's study of West Midlands Old English charter bounds, which he uses to scrutinize the evidence for the location of a twelfth-century Old English homiletic manuscript, Bodley 343.¹⁴ This manuscript's West Midlands links have been identified and discussed by a number of scholars, and Malcolm Godden proposed in 1979 that its associations with Wulfstan I and with CCCC, MS 178 'suggest a possible Worcester origin'.¹⁵ Since this assessment, however, Susan Irvine has argued that

¹² CUL, MS li. 1. 33; CCCC: MS 302, MS 303, MS 367; BL: Cotton MS Faustina A. IX, Cotton MS Otho A. XIII, Cotton MS Vespasian D. XIV; Bodleian: MS Bodley 343, MS Hatton 116; London, Lambeth Palace, MS 487; and Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B. 14. 52 (335).

¹³ Bodley 343, Hatton 116, and Lambeth 487.

¹⁴ Peter Kitson, 'Old English Dialects and the Stages of the Transition to Middle English', *Folia Linguistica Historica*, 11 (1992 for 1990), 27–87.

¹⁵ *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies: The Second Series: Text*, ed. by Malcolm Godden, EETS, s.s., 5 (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. xl.

Bodley 343's organization suggests that it was not written at one of the main monastic centres where the large known collections would have been available to its compiler. The manuscript, however, does show enough textual and other connections to suggest for its compiler proximity to Worcester and even limited access to the Worcester library. It was probably written near Worcester, though not at Worcester itself.¹⁶

Kitson has shown that Bodley 343's dialect is in fact much more indicative of a Hereford than of a Worcester scribal identity, and he proposes as a 'working hypothesis' that it was produced in Hereford, or 'within a radius of at most twenty miles east of Hereford'.¹⁷ If historical linguists such as Kitson were to extend this sort of study to other late Old English manuscripts, our map of the locations of West Midlands manuscript production of such late Old English would be hugely extended and refined.

Many but by no means all of these late Old English manuscripts contain preaching texts, and I have argued elsewhere that they provide clear evidence that preaching, and very probably some private reading, was done in the vernacular, and more specifically in a form of the vernacular very closely related to late Standard West-Saxon Old English, in the post-Conquest West Midlands.¹⁸ To be able to determine where and why these manuscripts are being made and used, it is necessary to ask a wider range of questions about their places of production and use.

The first of these questions would be what sorts of places might have been involved in producing and/or using Old English manuscripts from the late eleventh to the early thirteenth centuries. This necessitates working out which towns might have supported institutions — monasteries or cathedrals or parish churches — which needed vernacular books to use; all of the places mentioned so far in this essay which have monastic foundations could be included in that category. The next question would be which of these institutions might have been able to support a scriptorium,¹⁹

¹⁶ *Old English Homilies from MS Bodley 343*, ed. by Susan Irvine, EETS, o.s., 302 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. li–lii.

¹⁷ Kitson, 'Old English Dialects', p. 34. In this article, Kitson demonstrates an 'increase in dialectal intensity between the earlier sections and the last section of Bodley 343' (p. 79), and interprets this as the implementation of 'fairly comprehensive "house rules" for scribally debatable items, founded on a local vernacular but not necessarily slavishly following it' (p. 36).

¹⁸ Mary Swan, 'Imagining a Readership for Post Conquest Old English Manuscripts', in *Imagining the Book*, ed. by Stephen Kelly and John J. Thompson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 145–57.

¹⁹ Or, more precisely, 'non-permanent episcopal writing office', to use the formulation coined by Elaine Treharne at the Manuscripts of the West Midlands conference.

and which of them might have brought in manuscripts rather than making them in-house.²⁰

The question which follows from this is whether the scribes of these manuscripts are fixed members of a monastic scriptorium or potentially peripatetic professional scribes. Rodney Thomson's evidence for professional scribes operating at Worcester in the tenth century and R. A. B. Mynors and Thomson's description of the same type of activity in Hereford in the twelfth and thirteenth is startling, as it shows that even an institution big enough to support its own scriptorium might not have all of its books made there.²¹ It is, furthermore, vital that we do not omit to consider the possibility for scribes moving (even named ones, like Coleman, as well as those much more amorphous ones whose names we do not know) and, of course, for books moving too.

One particularly interesting pattern which can be traced is that of a good number of Old English manuscripts which are known or believed not to have been made in the West Midlands, but which seem to be brought there in or by the twelfth century from other (usually southern) places. Some examples will now be described, and the possible implications of this activity explored.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 115

Hatton 115 is a collection of homilies and instructional pieces of prose.²² All of its contents are in Old English and were written into the manuscript at different points in the eleventh and earlier twelfth century, apart from a table of contents, which was added to it in around 1200,²³ and some notes by the Tremulous Hand. Structurally, Hatton 115 is of particular interest for two reasons. The first is that

²⁰ Gameson, 'St Wulfstan', pp. 84–85, raises the possibility of 'major centres providing minor ones with the volumes they needed for their day-to-day existence'.

²¹ See R. A. B. Mynors and R. M. Thomson, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Hereford Cathedral Library* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1993), p. xix; and R. M. Thomson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Medieval Manuscripts in Worcester Cathedral Library* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2001) (hereafter 'Thomson, Worcester'), p. xxi, on Goding, a priest who wrote books for the monastery, and who was given the vill of Bredicote by Oswald (Bishop 961–92).

²² Except where otherwise noted, general descriptions of Old English manuscript contents and structure are taken from N. R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957).

²³ The manuscript's table of contents covers booklets 1–3, but not all the short additions to these booklets (Franzen, *The Tremulous Hand*, p. 43).

it is compiled out of a set of five separate booklets, along with some extra short pieces of text, and the second is that one of those booklets existed folded in half as a portable single homily before it was bound into the manuscript. This booklet — the fourth one — was also the earliest to be written, before the end of the eleventh century, and it clearly had an independent existence prior to its inclusion in the codex. The first three booklets are all in the same late eleventh-century hand, and the fifth is in a twelfth-century hand.²⁴

There is some uncertainty about exactly when the five booklets were bound together. They were all annotated by the Tremulous Hand, so they were all in a location — or locations — available to him in the early thirteenth century, but he does not treat the fourth and fifth booklets in the same way as he does the first three,²⁵ so it is possible that the last two were not yet bound with the others when he used them. One piece of evidence which implies that the manuscript in some form was in a library with other late Old English manuscripts by the late twelfth century or early thirteenth is the volume number 'XXII' written on the first folio of booklet 1. This matches, and fits the sequence of, volume numbers written on Bodleian, MSS Hatton 113 and 114 at this date, so if we accept that this numbering was done in Worcester, it follows that Hatton 115 was there, in some form, by then. By the sixteenth century, the manuscript was definitely in Worcester, since it has a Worcester inscription of that date.

Despite these pieces of evidence for its whereabouts in the sixteenth and the late twelfth or early thirteenth centuries, we do not know where any of the Hatton 115 booklets was written. Franzen has noted that Hatton 115 does not resemble in terms of script or layout other manuscripts thought to have been written at Worcester at the relevant date;²⁶ and Neil Ker was the first to point out that the main hand — that of the first three booklets — is very like that of the first part of another late Old English manuscript, BL, Cotton MS Faustina A. X.²⁷ This link

²⁴ Booklet 5 is prognostications. For a very clear description of the contents of each section of the manuscript, see Franzen, *The Tremulous Hand*, pp. 39–40, and *Worcester MSS*, pp. 47–52.

²⁵ Franzen notes that most of the very copious Middle English glosses by the Tremulous Hand in the manuscript are from an early layer of his work, and are only in booklets 1–3 and the additional material on fols 65–67. A later layer of annotation, almost entirely in Latin, by the Tremulous Hand includes booklet 4. The texts in booklet 5 were not glossed at all by him, although he did write three lines and word pairs in this booklet. He also made some additions and annotations to the table of contents (*Worcester MSS*, pp. 46–47).

²⁶ *Worcester MSS*, ed. by Franzen, p. 44.

²⁷ Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, p. 403.

on its own, however, does not solve the puzzle, since Cotton Faustina A. X's place of composition is also unknown, but its contents have fairly distinct south-east links — with Rochester or Canterbury, to be precise — and Treharne has proposed that booklets 1–3 of Hatton 115 'may be of south-eastern origin',²⁸ and also that the contents of booklet 5 might also have south-east connections.²⁹ Cotton Faustina A. X will be further considered later in this essay; to summarize for now what is known about Hatton 115: it is made up of booklets of Old English homiletic and admonitory texts, written between the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Most of its contents probably do not come from the West Midlands, but all of them were almost certainly there by the early thirteenth century at the latest, and they were all in Worcester by the sixteenth.

Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 367

CCCC 367 part II is another Old English codex which might have been assembled into its current form in the twelfth century and in Worcester. It includes a copy of the Old English translation of Bede's *De Temporibus*, which Treharne dates to the second half of the twelfth century, and a now-fragmentary and muddled collection of homilies, which she dates to the earlier part of the twelfth century.³⁰ The place at which these texts were written into the manuscript is not known, but scholars have identified south-eastern connections for them,³¹ and again Treharne argues for refining that identification to Rochester and for dating

²⁸ Elaine M. Treharne, 'The Dates and Origins of Three Twelfth-Century Manuscripts', in *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts and their Heritage*, ed. by Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine M. Treharne (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 227–53 (p. 233).

²⁹ Treharne, 'Dates and Origins', p. 236.

³⁰ Treharne, 'Dates and Origins', p. 241. The scribe of CCCC 367 also writes substantial parts of CUL Ii. 1. 33, a collection of Old English preaching texts and saints' lives written in the second half of the twelfth century. The place in which this scribe worked on CUL Ii. 1. 33 is not known; it has been suggested that some of the scribal hands in the manuscript show eastern or south-eastern features, possibly those of St Augustine's Canterbury or Rochester. After its production, CUL Ii. 1. 33 is likely to have been used at a different location, possibly Ely. See Oliver M. Traxel, *Language Change, Writing and Textual Interference in Post-Conquest Old English Manuscripts: The Evidence of Cambridge, University Library, Ii.1.33* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2004), especially p. 223, Treharne, 'Dates and Origins', pp. 233 and 242–44, and Mary P. Richards's review of Traxel, *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 106 (2007), 134–36.

³¹ Including *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies II*, ed. by Godden, p. lvii.

this layer of the manuscript to the first decades of the twelfth century.³² By contrast, it is thought that some of the other contents of CCCC 367 might have been written into the manuscript at Worcester, specifically the mid-eleventh-century booklist it contains, which was written in blank space at the end of a mid-eleventh-century *Life of St Kenelm*.³³ The booklist lists manuscripts which were probably at Worcester, and another Worcester document was written into the same quire as the booklist in the first half of the twelfth century. It is possible to tell that all of these parts of the manuscript were bound together by 1575 at the latest,³⁴ but not whether they were together in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries. The descriptions of some of the books in the CCCC 367 booklist match the contents of manuscripts which the Tremulous Hand annotated, but there are no annotations by him on any part of CCCC 367. I would argue from this that CCCC 367 was never at the library in which the Tremulous Hand was working, and that its booklist referred to the contents of a library elsewhere, in the place where the Tremulous Hand worked, perhaps as a reminder to the CCCC 367 scribe of what was available for copying in that place (Worcester, for example), which was not where the scribe was operating, nor where CCCC 367 was kept. In seeking to identify candidates for the place where the booklist scribe and CCCC 367 were based, it is worth noting the presence of the *Life of Kenelm* in the manuscript, and the fact that Kenelm is the patron of Winchcombe.³⁵

London, British Library, Cotton MS Faustina A. X

Working out where Cotton Faustina A. X was in the twelfth century would greatly increase our understanding of the function of Old English at this date.³⁶ As noted above, the scribe of the first part of this manuscript is the same as the

³² Treharne, 'Dates and Origins', pp. 234 and 235.

³³ See Treharne, 'Dates and Origins', p. 234, and Franzen, *The Tremulous Hand*, p. 74.

³⁴ Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, p. 110.

³⁵ An observation also made, independently, in Milton McC. Gatch, 'Piety and Liturgy in the Old English *Vision of Leofric*', in *Words, Texts and Manuscripts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Helmut Gneuss*, ed. by Michael Korhammer (Cambridge: Brewer, 1992), pp. 159–79. Gatch discusses the *Vision of Leofric* in CCCC 367, and reports a suggestion by Patrick Wormald that the texts on Kenelm and Leofric in the manuscript 'might more easily have been joined originally at Winchcombe, the centre of Kenelm's cult', than at Worcester (p. 162, n. 12).

³⁶ As observed by Franzen, *The Tremulous Hand*, pp. 40–41, n. 23.

scribe of the main parts of Hatton 115, and they might have been working in the south-east. A possible location for Cotton Faustina A. X a little later in the twelfth century might be identified if we note that some of its twelfth-century marginal additions are snippets of an Ælfrician text marked up for insertion at points of the text of Æthelwold's Old English composition known as 'King Edgar's Establishment of the Monasteries'; that the Ælfrician text in question is his *Life of Gregory*; that the snippets used in Cotton Faustina A. X are so short and anecdotal in tone, and their effect on the text they annotate so marginal, that they are most likely drawn from the memory of an annotator who is very familiar with Ælfric's *Life of Gregory*; ³⁷ and that we know that Worcester in the twelfth century and before is very interested in Gregory and his works. ³⁸ Perhaps, therefore, in the form of Hatton 115 and Cotton Faustina A. X we have evidence for manuscripts being brought from the south-east, probably Rochester, to Worcester in the twelfth century, and reorganized there.

Latin Manuscripts

Several Latin manuscripts are also thought to have come to the West Midlands, and probably to Worcester, by the end of the Middle Ages at the latest, and in some cases between the late eleventh century and the early thirteenth. They include Worcester, Cathedral Library, MS F. 173, a book of masses and offices for the sick and the dead, probably written at Winchester Old Minster in the mid-eleventh century. ³⁹ CCCC, MS 146, an early eleventh-century collection of adjurations, Pontifical and Benedictional, was probably written in Winchester Old Minster, ⁴⁰ but was in Worcester at some later point, and by the end of the eleventh century at the latest, since extra leaves were added to the manuscript in

³⁷ On fols 148–51. For a discussion of the reuse of snippets of Ælfric's *Life of Gregory* in this manuscript, see Mary Swan, 'Ælfric as Source: The Exploitation of Ælfric's *Catholic Homilies* from the late Tenth to Twelfth Centuries' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Leeds, 1993), pp. 160–64.

³⁸ As outlined by Mason, *St Wulfstan of Worcester*, pp. 206–08.

³⁹ Thomson (*Worcester*, p. 116) thinks this was in Worcester before the Reformation.

⁴⁰ Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, p. 51, gives this as the probable place of production, but Helmut Gneuss, *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts: A List of Manuscripts and Manuscript Fragments Written or Owned in England up to 1100* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001), p. 31, tentatively gives Christ Church, Canterbury, as an alternative location.

Worcester at this period and in the beginning of the twelfth century. Some of the layers of BL, MS Royal 4. A. XIV, a tenth-century collection of Latin texts including work by Jerome copied in the tenth century, a ninth-century Missal, and a mid-twelfth-century Old English charm, are also probably originally from Winchester,⁴¹ but another part of the manuscript has West Midlands affiliations: two leaves of an eighth- to ninth-century *Life of Guthlac*, which was glossed in Old English probably in Worcester around the date it was written, were used as binding leaves of the codex,⁴² and the whole codex also shows signs of being put together in Worcester, in or after the mid-twelfth century.⁴³ This would mean that the Winchester parts of the manuscript were brought to Worcester very soon after the copying of the Old English charm, so the scenario is not of an unused and unwanted manuscript being donated to or acquired by Worcester, but rather of a current, recently amplified manuscript being moved there and reassembled.

As Treharne has mentioned, it is relatively certain that Hatton 113 and 114 were made in Worcester, and they were separated and rebound in the West Midlands — and most probably in Worcester — in around 1200. Further evidence for manuscripts being reworked in Worcester around this date is noted by McIntyre, in the form of the extensive correcting in the late eleventh to early twelfth century of earlier manuscripts which she ascribes to Worcester.⁴⁴ As McIntyre points out, some of this correcting is very scholarly and careful, and clearly done by comparison with another copy of the text in question. It looks, then, as if an extensive programme of manuscript reorganization, or more precisely reformatting, is going on in at least one West Midlands library or scriptorium — probably Worcester — at this date: perhaps to make a set of texts, especially Old English preaching texts, which is more efficiently organized for reference and lending and copying.

Now, the key to all of this activity for the later end of the timespan could be the Tremulous Hand — assuming that all of the manuscripts he annotated were in (or were brought to) the same place when he worked on them, and that he did not travel around to consult them in a range of different places; and then, in addition, assuming that he did his work at Worcester, which is something we do not know for certain. It is clear, however, that the extensive and organized and

⁴¹ Gneuss, *Handlist*, p. 80.

⁴² The *Life of Guthlac* is dated by Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, p. 321, to s. viii/ix.

⁴³ Ker notes, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Anglo-Saxon*, p. 320, that the script of the title on fol. 1 was probably written in Worcester in the twelfth century.

⁴⁴ McIntyre, 'Early Twelfth-Century Worcester Cathedral Priory', pp. 216–23.

committed West Midlands work on Old English manuscripts from the late eleventh to the early thirteenth centuries sketched out in this essay is something larger than the activity of one person. This is shown by the variety of twelfth-century hands which correct the manuscripts McIntyre discusses. I would argue that it is safer to assume that this work is being carried out in at least one place, and that it is being produced for use in a number of places in the West Midlands area, so that Old English texts can be circulated and used.

London, Lambeth Palace, MS 487

The interpretation of this manuscript very much relies on what we can understand of the extent and purpose of West Midlands Old English textual activity in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.⁴⁵ In terms of current work on post-Conquest West Midlands Old English manuscript production, the central question is whether Lambeth 487 represents ongoing or new activity.⁴⁶ The former — that Lambeth 487 is an example of ongoing activity — is, I believe, more likely, partly because of the growing sense amongst those working on this material of extensive and committed Old English textual production in the West Midlands right through the twelfth century, and partly because some of the texts in Lambeth 487 reproduce pre-Conquest Old English preaching materials in a way which implies that those materials had never gone out of circulation, and that it could not have been made without a pre-existing, ongoing capacity to compose and recopy Old English.

I agree with the argument put forward in Bella Millett's essay in this volume that the audience for which Lambeth 487 was made is very likely to be a non-Benedictine one. In my earlier work on the manuscript, I explored the possibility of its manufacture for a female recluse, on the grounds of the potential appeal to an Anglophone woman living a paramonastic life of its mix of more traditionally

⁴⁵ For more detailed discussions of particular aspects of Lambeth 487, see Mary Swan, 'Imagining a Readership', and 'Old English Textual Activity in the Reign of Henry II', in *Writers of the Reign of Henry II: Twelve Essays*, ed. by Ruth Kennedy and Simon Meecham-Jones (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 151–68.

⁴⁶ The Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project, 'The Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220', directed by Elaine Treharne and Mary Swan, which runs from 2005 to 2010, will produce an analytical overview of post-Conquest Old English texts in their manuscript contexts, and will provide the basis for a much clearer assessment of how widespread the production of this material is, and what needs it serves. For full details, see <<http://www.le.ac.uk/ee/em1060to1220>>.

styled homiletic prose and newer items reflecting the development of affective piety. As Millett reports in her essay, I have also noted that the rhetoric of almost all the items in Lambeth 487 is that of public preaching, but this need not preclude its use for private reading. The use of preaching texts by private readers, outside the context of a public delivery in church or in a monastic setting, is demonstrated by several examples from pre-Conquest England, including the Vercelli Book (Vercelli, Cathedral Library, MS CXVII), a manuscript containing vernacular homilies and poetry, whose most likely intended use is now accepted as private devotional reading by an individual, and the case of the devout secular landholders Æthelweard and Æthelmær, a father and son who commissioned some of Ælfric's most substantial preaching works, apparently for use in their own household as domestic devotional reading.

Both hypotheses for an intended function for Lambeth 487 — private devotional reading, possibly by a female recluse, and Millett's suggestion of a pastoral function for the manuscript in preaching to the laity — mean that it was not necessarily made by a member of a monastery, nor in a monastic scriptorium. Both scenarios still, however, require some of the contents of Lambeth 487 to be drawn from texts available in major West Midlands cathedral or monastery libraries. In this case and in the others discussed above, therefore, our configuration of Old English textual production in the West Midlands in this period needs to take into account mobile libraries or mobile readers, or both.

Conclusion

Those working on the localization of manuscript production and adaptation in the West Midlands need above all to assess the movement around the region of scribes, texts, and vernacular manuscripts. For all that Worcester seems the obvious place on which to pin organized, well-resourced Old English manuscript production in this late period, caution is appropriate: Worcester did not exist in isolation; it was always very strongly knitted in to surrounding towns and their religious institutions — either in collaboration or in friction. Post-Conquest preaching and reading in Old English will not have stopped at the precise borders of the city of Worcester, but must have spread across the Worcester diocese and neighbouring ones, at least. Just like later Middle English scholars, then, those working on post-Conquest Old English and on Early Middle English need to keep at least the whole of the West Midlands in their mental map of textual production, and also to think not just about where manuscripts were made, or assembled, but also about where they were made for, or subsequently used.

THE PASTORAL CONTEXT OF THE TRINITY AND LAMBETH HOMILIES

Bella Millett

In the *Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, Thomas Hahn comments that the surviving early Middle English sermon-collections 'have seemed so lacking in identifying traits (by genre, topic, style, audience or authorship) that they have come to be known by the libraries and shelf marks of their final resting places'.¹ This essay will nevertheless try to identify a contemporary context for two of these collections, the 'Trinity Homilies' in Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B. 14. 52 (335) and the 'Lambeth Homilies' in London, Lambeth Palace, MS 487.

The place of the Trinity and Lambeth collections in the history of English preaching has not yet been thoroughly investigated; as Mary Swan and Elaine Treharne say, they 'have formed the basis of very little sustained study by either Anglo-Saxonists or later medieval scholars'.² What work has been done has focused mainly on their relationship to the Old English preaching tradition (demonstrable in the case of the Lambeth collection, which includes material from Ælfric and Wulfstan I,³ although harder to establish for the Trinity sermons), and both collections have been characterized as stylistically backward-looking, the

¹ Thomas Hahn, 'Early Middle English', in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. by David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 61–91 (p. 82).

² Mary Swan and Elaine M. Treharne, 'Introduction', in *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century*, ed. by Swan and Treharne, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 30 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 1–10 (p. 2).

³ Lambeth 9, 10, and 11 draw on sermons by Ælfric; Lambeth 2 includes a passage adapted from Wulfstan's *Be Godcundre Warnunge*.

product of a period when a 'renewed emphasis on preaching' in English 'tended to find expression in harking back to older homiliaries'.⁴ Celia Sisam suggested in 1951 that Lambeth 487 represented the 'last flicker' of an earlier tradition, noting the absence of corrections and revisions in the manuscript and its uncompleted text of the *Poema morale*: 'Perhaps a more modern collection had displaced the old one, or a younger preacher had come to the parish.'⁵ Similarly, Jerome Oetgen claimed in 1983 that the 'Trinity Homilies' 'represent the "ancient" tradition of English vernacular sermon-making rather than the "modern" tradition of the *artes praedicandi* and university sermons. They hark back to the period when Old English homiletics flourished [...]. But the manifestation of this ancient tradition in post-Conquest England was a pale reflection of the glory it once was'.⁶

Elaine Treharne, however, has recently challenged this view. In a paper delivered at the Kalamazoo International Congress on Medieval Studies in 2004,⁷ she argued that it was misleading to explain the inclusion of Old English elements in post-Conquest sermon collections as 'backward-looking' or 'antiquarian': the later elements in these collections showed an active response to the requirements of a changed theological and pastoral context, and their use of earlier (particularly Ælfrician) material might reflect not nostalgia for the Anglo-Saxon past but a sense of its continuing 'authority and applicability'. The strength of her alternative reading of the evidence is that it is holistic, taking account of the later as well as the earlier elements in these multilayered collections. This essay aims to complement her research by exploring further the evidence for the pastoral context of the sermon-collections in Trinity B. 14. 52 and Lambeth 487, concentrating particularly on their later material. The starting-point for identifying the context of these collections has to be the dating and localization of the manuscripts in which they survive. Trinity B. 14. 52 has been dated to the late twelfth century, and the dialect of its two main scribes has been localized to the east Midlands area. Lambeth 487 has been dated to the first quarter of the thirteenth century or perhaps a little

⁴ H. L. Spencer, 'Middle English Sermons', in *The Sermon*, ed. by Beverly Mayne Kienzle, *Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental*, 81–83 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), pp. 597–660 (p. 616).

⁵ Celia Sisam, 'The Scribal Tradition of the Lambeth Homilies', *Review of English Studies*, n.s., 2 (1951), 105–13 (p. 110, n. 2).

⁶ Jerome Oetgen, 'The Trinity College Ascension Sermon: Sources and Structure', *Mediaeval Studies*, 45 (1983), 410–17 (p. 411).

⁷ Elaine Treharne, 'Unoriginal Sin: Textually Transmitted Deviancy in Old English Prose'. I am grateful to Professor Treharne for providing me with a copy of this paper.

earlier and localized to the West Midlands.⁸ This chronological and geographical distance, however, need not exclude the possibility of a common (or at least related) pastoral context, since the two collections include a significant amount of shared material. Both manuscripts include a text of the later twelfth-century *Poema morale*, and they also share, in similar though not identical form, five Middle English sermons not recorded elsewhere: Trinity 4 / Lambeth 7 (an exposition of the Apostles' Creed), Trinity 25 / Lambeth 17 (*Euntes ibant et flebant*), Trinity 26 / Lambeth 13 (*Qui parce seminat*), Trinity 30 / Lambeth 16 (*Estote fortes in bello*), and Trinity 32 / Lambeth 15 (*Qui vult venire post me*). The texts of the *Poema morale* in the two collections are not closely related.⁹ The same appears to be true of the five shared sermons; it is more likely that they go back ultimately to a common source, probably (as I shall argue below) not earlier than the late twelfth century.

The dating of Trinity B. 14. 52 and Lambeth 487 places them within a period of radical change in preaching and pastoral care. During the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries two originally separate developments, the evolution of a new 'scholastic' style of preaching in the Paris schools and the Church's attempts to improve the morals and education of the secular clergy, began to converge. The initial point of convergence seems to have been late twelfth-century Paris, where the movement of pastoral reform associated with Peter Cantor and his circle involved both the development of aids for preaching to the laity and an emphasis on the need for their pastors to have *ad minus scientiam et munditiam corporis*;¹⁰ this link

⁸ Margaret Laing and Angus McIntosh, 'Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 335: Its Texts and their Transmission', in *New Science out of Old Books: Studies in Manuscripts and Early Printed Books in Honour of A. I. Doyle*, ed. by Richard Beadle and A. J. Piper (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1995), pp. 14–47, localize the dialect of the first scribe, A, to 'somewhere near where the borders of Essex, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire meet' and that of the second, B, to south Suffolk, south Cambridgeshire, or 'less probably' south Huntingdonshire (p. 33). Margaret Laing localizes the language of Lambeth 487 tentatively to north-west Worcestershire, but comments that it might be placed geographically 'anywhere in the north Herefordshire, north Worcestershire, south Shropshire intersection' (personal communication, May 2007). I am grateful to Ralph Hanna and Malcolm Parkes for advice on the dating of both these manuscripts, and to Margaret Laing for her advice on the localization of Lambeth 487.

⁹ See Betty Hill, 'The Twelfth-Century *Conduct of Life*, formerly the *Poema Morale* or *A Moral Ode*', *Leeds Studies in English*, n.s., 9 (1977), 97–144 (pp. 98–106).

¹⁰ Peter Cantor, *Summa Abel*, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds latin 455, fol. 83^{va}, cited by Franco Morenzoni, *Des Écoles aux paroisses: Thomas de Chobham et la promotion de la prédication au début du XIII^e siècle*, Collection des Études Augustiniennes, Série Moyen-Âge et Temps modernes, 30 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), p. 94.

between preaching and clerical reform was reinforced on an international level by the decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215. The Third Lateran Council of 1179 had insisted that clerics in holy orders dismiss their mistresses (*mulierculas suas*) from their households on pain of losing their office and benefice (Canon 11) and required all cathedral churches to provide free teaching for their own *clerici* and for poor scholars (Canon 18). Canon 11 of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 repeated and strengthened the latter requirement, on the grounds that it had not been adequately implemented ('quoniam in multis ecclesiis id minime observatur'), and added that the teachers of theology employed by cathedrals should give instruction to priests and others particularly on those matters relevant to the cure of souls ('et in his praesertim informet, quae ad curam animarum spectare noscuntur').¹¹ This explicit emphasis on pastoral care was taken further in Canon 10, which authorized bishops who were unable, for whatever reason, to fulfil their obligation to preach to the laity (*ministrare populo verbum Dei*) to appoint suitable deputies, *potentes in opere et sermone*, to visit the *plebes* committed to their care and edify them by both precept and example (*verbo [...] et exemplo*).¹²

There are some indications that the Church in England was an early adopter of these reforms. Two important recent studies, Joseph Goering's *William de Montibus (ca 1140–1213): The Schools and the Literature of Pastoral Care* (1992) and Franco Morenzoni's *Des Écoles aux paroisses: Thomas de Chobham et la promotion de la prédication au début du XIII^e siècle* (2001), have traced their impact on England in considerable detail. The English bishops seem to have implemented Canon 18 of the Third Lateran Council without the need for further prompting; Alexander of Ashby, writing about 1200, contrasts the time *quo puer eram scolasticus* (probably in the 1160s or 1170s), when teachers who did not charge for their time were rare, with the present day, when such teachers were available in almost every city.¹³ Furthermore, some of the earliest of the substantial body of preaching aids which began to appear from the late twelfth century onwards originated in England: the pastoral works of William de Montibus, who taught theology at Lincoln from

¹¹ *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. by Josephus Alberigo and others (Basle: Herder, 1962), p. 216.

¹² *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. by Alberigo and others, p. 215.

¹³ *De artificioso modo predicandi*, ed. by Franco Morenzoni, in *Alexandri Essebiensis Opera omnia, Pars I: Opera theologica*, ed. by Franco Morenzoni and Thomas H. Bestul, CCCM, 188 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 52–53.

the 1180s to his death in 1213;¹⁴ Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi* (c. 1200);¹⁵ the *distinctio* collection, *Pantheologus*, compiled by Peter of Cornwall (d. 1221);¹⁶ and the *Summa de arte praedicandi* of Thomas of Chobham (probably composed between 1215–16 and 1221–22).¹⁷

How far can the collections in Trinity B. 14. 52 and Lambeth 487 be related to these new developments? It is true that some of the sermons they include are, in Thomas Hahn's phrase, 'so lacking in identifying traits' that it would be pointless to try and place them in a specific context; they use the 'ancient' form of the homily, which continued in use throughout the Middle Ages, and lack any internal references suggesting a particular audience or institutional framework. Others, however, include internal evidence which has not been fully investigated in the past.

Some of this evidence is stylistic, reflecting the influence of recent developments in preaching technique. During the second half of the twelfth century, a new method of preaching, sometimes described as 'scholastic', developed in the Paris schools and circles associated with them.¹⁸ This method was characterized by the use of increasingly schematic division and subdivision, sometimes reinforced by rhyme and other kinds of verbal patterning, to structure the argument of the sermon; the commonest method of division was the biblical *distinctio*, distinguishing the different senses of a word used in the Bible and illustrating each one by scriptural quotation.¹⁹ In a recent essay, I examined the style of the five

¹⁴ See Joseph Goering, *William de Montibus (ca 1140–1213): The Schools and the Literature of Pastoral Care*, Studies and Texts, 108 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1992), for editions of six of the shorter works and descriptions of the others.

¹⁵ See note 13 above.

¹⁶ See R. W. Hunt, 'English Learning in the Late Twelfth Century' (1936), repr. in *Essays in Medieval History: Selected from the Transactions of the Royal Historical Society on the Occasion of its Centenary*, ed. by R. W. Southern (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 106–28.

¹⁷ Thomas de Chobham, *Summa de arte praedicandi*, ed. by Franco Morenzoni, CCCM, 82 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1988), pp. xxxvi–xxxviii.

¹⁸ On this tradition, see Peter Tibber, 'The Origins of the Scholastic Sermon, c. 1130–c. 1210' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, 1984); D. L. d'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons Diffused From Paris before 1300* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); and Mark Zier, 'Sermons of the Twelfth Century Schoolmasters and Canons', in *The Sermon*, ed. by Kienzle, pp. 325–62.

¹⁹ On biblical *distinctiones*, see Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, 'Biblical Distinctions in the Thirteenth Century', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge*, 41 (1974),

sermons shared by both collections.²⁰ All five could be shown to reflect, to a greater or lesser extent, the distinctive stylistic features of the 'scholastic' sermon; and similar features could be found in some other sermons in both Trinity and Lambeth collections. These stylistic features indicated that at least some of the sermons in both collections were recently composed; and in a few cases, there was evidence to suggest a date of composition not just at some point in the second half of the twelfth century, but towards its end.

One feature indicating a relatively late date is the use of *divisiones* (usually biblical *distinctiones*) to structure the sermon as a whole, rather than simply the subdivisions of its argument. Up to the beginning of the thirteenth century, subdivision was much more common than division (Richard and Mary Rouse describe the characteristic structure of the twelfth-century sermon as 'a sequence of lists, rather than an overall division subdivided internally');²¹ but two of the five shared sermons, Trinity 25 / Lambeth 17 and Trinity 26 / Lambeth 13, anticipate the more highly organized structure of the thirteenth-century 'thematic' sermon, structuring their argument wholly or largely around a single biblical *distinctio*, and the same is true of Trinity 1, an Advent sermon schematically structured around a four-point *distinctio* of the different senses of *adventus*.²² Since this structure, which Richard and Mary Rouse describe as 'quasi-thematic', is very rare in the twelfth century,²³ it seems likely that these sermons at least were composed relatively late in the century.

Another feature which may help to date these sermons rather more precisely is the relative complexity of their *divisiones*. Since the number of points within a *divisio* tends to increase with time, undated works using a common topos can sometimes be located at least approximately within a particular timeline. In a

27–37, and Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, 'Statim invenire: Schools, Preachers, and New Attitudes to the Page', in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. by Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 201–25.

²⁰ 'The Discontinuity of English Prose: Structural Innovation in the Trinity and Lambeth Homilies', in *Text and Language in Medieval English Prose: A Festschrift for Tadao Kubouchi*, ed. by Jacek Fisiak, John Scahill, and Akio Ozumi (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 1–14.

²¹ Richard H. Rouse and Mary A. Rouse, *Preachers, Florilegia and Sermons: Studies on the 'Manipulus florum' of Thomas of Ireland* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1979), p. 69.

²² For a full analysis of the structure of this sermon, and the evidence for its chronological placing, see Millett, 'Discontinuity of English Prose', pp. 5–7.

²³ See Rouse and Rouse, 'Statim invenire', pp. 217–18.

1999 article exploring the tradition behind the sixteen-point list of 'conditions of confession' in *Ancrene Wisse*, I found that it was possible to place it in the context of a longer-term development extending from the early twelfth to the mid-thirteenth century, beginning with a three-point *divisio* in Bernard of Clairvaux, increasing to a 'short list' of five or six points in the late twelfth century, expanding rapidly to a fifteen-point 'long list' around 1200, largely standardized on sixteen points in the early thirteenth century, but nevertheless peaking at twenty-seven points in the mid-thirteenth century.²⁴ My more recent research has suggested that this pattern of expansion might be not unique to a single topos but paradigmatic, exemplifying a more general process of development. Since shorter lists sometimes survive alongside longer lists, they need not indicate an early date,²⁵ but a longer list can provide a terminus a quo. The standard twelfth- and thirteenth-century three-point *distinctio* on *adventus* (Christ comes *ad homines*, *in homines*, *contra homines*, i.e. through the Incarnation, his inspiration of individual Christians, and the Last Judgement) seems to have been developed by Bernard of Clairvaux, but the additional sense of *adventus* incorporated in the four-point *distinctio* in Trinity 1 (the judgement of the individual soul at death) can be traced back only to the 1160s,²⁶ and four-point *distinctiones* on *adventus* incorporating this sense are not recorded elsewhere until towards the end of the twelfth century (the earliest datable example is in Innocent III's *De Miseria humanae conditionis*, c. 1195).²⁷

It is also probable that a late twelfth-century expansion of a 'short list' to a 'long list' underlies the list of ten impediments to confession in Trinity 12: 'Decem sunt que impediunt confessionem, scilicet hec: obliuio, ignorancia, negligencia, verecundia, timor, diffidencia, delicacia, fiducia, pertinacia, desperacio.'²⁸ Most

²⁴ See Bella Millett, 'Ancrene Wisse and the Conditions of Confession', *English Studies*, 80 (1999), 193–215.

²⁵ For example, four- and ten-point lists of the impediments to confession (see below) coexisted into the fifteenth century; see Thomas N. Tentler, *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 72–73.

²⁶ See Millett, 'Discontinuity of English Prose', p. 6; also Morenzoni, *Des Écoles aux paroisses*, p. 110.

²⁷ See Millett, 'Discontinuity of English Prose', pp. 6–7.

²⁸ *Old English Homilies of the Twelfth Century, from the Unique MS. B. 14. 52 in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, Second Series*, ed. by R. Morris, EETS, o.s., 53 (London: Trübner, 1873), p. 71. I have modernized the punctuation of all quotations from this edition, and from Morris's edition of Lambeth 487 (see note 38 below).

twelfth-century lists of impediments to confession are ‘short lists’; the Cistercian Isaac of Stella has three points, *cupiditas*, *timor*, and *pudor*,²⁹ but the usual number is four, as in Bernard of Clairvaux, *pudor*, *timor*, *spes*, and *desperatio*.³⁰ Nevertheless, a ten-point list similar to the one in Trinity 12 appears towards the end of the twelfth century in Alan of Lille’s *De sex aliis cherubim*: ‘Tertia penna est firmitas, quia fortis et firma debet esse confessio. Haec firmitas, decem quae confessionem impediunt, expellit. Quae sunt illa? Pudor, timor, contemptus presbyteri, desperatio, praesumptio, perversitas, ignorantia, oblivio, negligentia et necessitas, quae sola excusabilis est.’³¹ This list does not correspond point-by-point to the list in Trinity 12. Alan’s *contemptus presbyteri* and *necessitas* are not in Trinity, and Trinity’s *delicacia* is not in Alan’s list. Trinity’s *pertinacia* (obstinate persistence in sin) is probably not to be identified with Alan’s *perversitas*, which seems to mean unbelief (its antidote is *fidei ratio*). However, this leaves five exact matches to the Trinity list, *oblivio*, *timor*, *ignorantia*, *negligentia*, and *desperatio* (*diffidentia* in Trinity 12 seems to be a milder version of *desperatio*); Alan’s *pudor* probably corresponds to Trinity’s *verecundia*; and although it is not clear how far Trinity’s *fiducia* (defined as trusting in a long life and time to repent) overlaps with Alan’s *praesumptio* (which is countered by *divinae justitiae districta severitas*), both could be seen as forms of *spes*, one of the basic impediments in the standard four-point list. The parallels between the lists in *De sex aliis cherubim* and Trinity 12 suggest that they are related, though probably not directly; it is likely that their common point of origin was late twelfth-century Paris.

The evidence discussed so far suggests that the traditional view that the Trinity and Lambeth collections are essentially ‘backward-looking’ needs to be reconsidered; and Oetgen’s more specific claim that the ‘Trinity Homilies’ ‘represent the “ancient” tradition of English vernacular sermon-making rather than the “modern” tradition of the *artes praedicandi* and university sermons’ certainly needs qualification. In particular, the five sermons shared by Trinity B. 14. 52 and Lambeth 487 are notably ‘modern’ in style, showing stylistic and structural features which link them closely not only with the ‘scholastic’ sermon tradition, but with new developments within that tradition towards the end of the twelfth century. It is possible that all five were based on contemporary Latin ‘model sermons’, as defined by David d’Avray: ‘sermons written for a proximate public of users and

²⁹ Isaac of Stella, *Sermo* 38, *PL* 194, 1821.

³⁰ Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermones de diversis*, *Sermo* 104, *PL* 183, 730.

³¹ *PL* 210, 273–74.

an ultimate public of listeners'.³² Although the genre can be traced back as far as the model sermons in Gregory I's *Regula pastoralis*, which were still being used in the early thirteenth century,³³ from the end of the twelfth century onwards there was a major expansion in the production of model sermon collections, either incorporated in *artes praedicandi* (as in Alan of Lille's *Summa de arte praedicatoria*, Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi*, and Thomas of Chobham's *Summa de arte praedicandi*) or circulated separately. All five shared sermons incorporate Latin elements whose sources have so far not been traced, providing a schematic structural framework for the sermon as a whole.³⁴ There are some instances in which these Latin elements seem to incorporate instructions addressed directly to the preacher. In the shared sermon on the creed (Trinity 4 / Lambeth 7), an introductory Latin passage³⁵ includes the sentence 'Insinuandum est que sit fides catholica, et que sit debita baptismo custodia, et que Dei mandatorum obseruantia, id est, uite mundicia'.³⁶ The gerundival construction *insinuandum est* reads more like a direction to the preacher than an address to the audience; it can be paralleled in one of the model sermons in Gregory's *Regula pastoralis*, 'Aliter admonendi sunt humiles, atque aliter elati. Illis insinuandum est [...] istis vero intimandum est. . .'.³⁷ It is not reflected in either of the English translations; instead, it is replaced by a different English sentence which in Trinity 4 includes a direct address by the preacher to his audience: 'Ac for þat elch man beð on fulcninge of alle synnen [iclensed], and ogh to cunnen his bileue ar he fulcninge underfo, þarfore Ic wile segen ow gure bileue and gure bede, and tachen hit ew bi Godes fultume'.³⁸ There is a similar construction in the Latin passage

³² D'Avray, *Preaching of the Friars*, p. 105.

³³ Two of them are drawn on in one of the works of the *Ancrene Wisse* group, *Epistel of Meidenhad*, which also uses two model sermons from Alan of Lille's late twelfth-century collection, *Summa de arte praedicatoria*; see *Hali Meidhad*, ed. by Bella Millett, EETS, o.s., 284 (London: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. xlv–xlvi.

³⁴ For more detailed discussion, see Millett, 'Discontinuity of English Prose', pp. 4–5.

³⁵ The Latin passage is omitted in Lambeth 7, which retains only its Middle English translation, but retained in Trinity 4.

³⁶ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 15.

³⁷ Gregory, *Regula pastoralis*, Ch. 17, PL 77, 77.

³⁸ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 17. Lambeth 7 has only 'And þeh alle men beon of hore sunnen iclensed et þe fulht, noþeles heo ahen for to cu[nn]en heore bileue' (*Old English Homilies and Homiletic Treatises* [...], *First Series*, ed. by Richard Morris, EETS, o.s., 29, 34 (London: [n.pub.], 1868; repr. Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 1998), p. 73).

dividing the theme in Trinity 30 / Lambeth 16, pointing out that since Christ preached to a variety of audiences, it is necessary to specify the precise context and meaning of the text *Estote fortes in bello et pugnate cum antiquo serpente*: 'Quia uero diuersa hominum genera sequebantur ut audirent eum, et ipse sermones suos direxit, tum ad discipulos, tum ad populum, tum ad hos et illos, aperiendum est et quibus, et de qua fortitudine et de quo bello, et de quo serpente [...] dixit.'³⁹ In both Middle English versions, *aperiendum est* is converted into a more direct address to the audience; the text in Lambeth 16 retains some of the sense of the original construction ('þerfore hit is god þet mon ow segge hwiche he munegeþ to þis fehte'⁴⁰), but in Trinity it is converted more thoroughly ('and forþi wil en segen eow hwilc mannisshe he þus munegeþe').⁴¹ It is possible that other sermons in the Trinity and Lambeth collections are also based on Latin 'model sermons'. Lambeth 14, for instance, which occurs in an otherwise unbroken run of sermons shared with Trinity B. 14. 52 (Lambeth 13, 15, 16, and 17), includes a high proportion of untraced Latin, serving as a structural framework for the sermon, as does the 'quasi-thematic' Trinity 1.

So far I have been arguing that at least some of the sermons in the Trinity and Lambeth collections reflect contemporary developments in preaching; do they also reflect contemporary developments in pastoral care? Relatively little has been written about the possible users of these homilies (whether their 'proximate public' of pastors or their 'ultimate public' of listeners or readers), and much of what has been written has limited itself to the internal evidence of the texts rather than attempting to relate this evidence to a broader historical context.

Although it has recently been suggested, by Mary Swan and others, that Lambeth 487 may have been compiled for reading by female religious (whether nuns or anchoresses), the general consensus is that the internal evidence of the texts in both Lambeth 487 and Trinity B. 14. 52 points towards public preaching. Mary Swan has said, 'The rhetoric of almost every item in Lambeth 487 is explicitly that of public preaching, not private reading',⁴² and the same could be said of the Trinity sermons. Sometimes the sermons refer to delivery on a specific day and/or

³⁹ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, pp. 185, 187. In fact, the theme is not (as claimed in the Trinity version of the sermon) from the Gospels but an antiphon used for Vespers in the vigils of the Apostles; cf., however, II Kings 13. 28 *roboramini, et estote viri fortes*, and Hebrews 11. 34 *fortes facti sunt in bello*.

⁴⁰ *Old English Homilies, First Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 151.

⁴¹ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 187.

⁴² Personal communication, March 2004.

in a specific place, and they may explicitly address a listening audience — as in Trinity 27, where the preacher takes his theme from ‘On of þe holie writes þe ben red herinne today’, and tells his audience, ‘Lusted ð nu. . .’⁴³ But the nature of these places, preachers, and audiences has not so far been much investigated.

It has been suggested more than once that these collections were compiled for (and perhaps, in the case of Lambeth 487, by) parish priests. Some of the material they contain would certainly have been suitable for preaching at parish level, such as the expositions of the Apostles’ Creed (in the shared sermon Trinity 4 / Lambeth 7) and the paternoster (in prose in Trinity 5, in verse in Lambeth 6); in the early thirteenth-century pastoral *Summa Qui bene presunt* by Richard of Wetheringsett, William de Montibus’s pupil, the creed and the paternoster head the list of the topics which were to be most frequently preached on (*precipue sermonibus insinuanda*) to the laity.⁴⁴ But it does not necessarily follow that we should assume (as Celia Sisam assumes of Lambeth 487) that these collections offer us ‘a specimen of the sermons a parish priest gave to his congregation at the end of the twelfth century’.⁴⁵ Even if they were compiled for parish priests, they are unlikely to be typical of the parish preaching of the time; and their contents suggest other possible pastoral contexts.

Joseph Goering, in his study of William de Montibus, has warned us against imposing modern preconceptions on the very different pastoral environment of this period:

The modern expectation that priests be educated in the schools and readers of learned books is the product of many centuries of development [. . .]. Throughout most of the Middle Ages, the parish priest was, first and foremost, a member of the local community [. . .]. He might or might not be married, he might or might not have paid for his office or inherited it from his father, and he might or might not be educated, depending on the prevailing customs and expectations of the local community [. . .]. His education was more often that of a traditional apprenticeship under the incumbent priest than formal training in the schools of arts, canon law, or theology.⁴⁶

⁴³ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 159. In the shared sermon on the creed, the preacher says, ‘We habbeð bigunnen to sege ou on English hwat bitocneð þe Crede’, and in the Trinity 4 version explains to his audience that the Virgin Mary conceived her son ‘alswo gie on ower herte understonden þe word of mi muð þe Ich speke to eu’ (*Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 21).

⁴⁴ See Goering, *William de Montibus*, pp. 89–90.

⁴⁵ Sisam, ‘Scribal Tradition of the Lambeth Homilies’, p. 105.

⁴⁶ Goering, *William de Montibus*, p. 60.

In an article on the thirteenth-century parish,⁴⁷ Goering traces the ways in which this situation was beginning to change during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Parish priests were beginning to be involved in Church activities at levels higher than the parish, 'through the increasingly efficient use of such officials as the archdeacon and the rural dean, and through the institution of regular visitations, councils, and synods';⁴⁸ they were increasingly expected to preach, and to perform other duties formerly expected of the bishop and his deputies, and arrangements were made for them to be educated further, either in local schools or in the emergent universities. But he also sees this process of transition as 'slow and uneven': 'throughout most of [the thirteenth] century, many parish priests were scarcely literate and, more pertinent, scarcely interested in using such new-fangled modes of education as the book. The use of literature as a means of educating the local priest was only beginning in the thirteenth century.'⁴⁹ Some statistical confirmation of his point is offered by a case study in Franco Morenzoni's study of Thomas of Chobham, which analyses the proportion of *magistri*⁵⁰ presented to a benefice or instituted as vicars or rectors of a church in the diocese of Lincoln between 1209 and 1253.⁵¹ Over the whole period, the average is 14.7 per cent, rising from 12.8 per cent during the episcopate of Hugh of Wells (1209–35) to 16.9 per cent under Robert Grosseteste (1235–53); some were members of cathedral chapters, and the great majority of *magistri* were appointed as rectors (who might be non-resident) rather than vicars (3.75 per cent under Hugh of Wells, 2.78 per cent under Grosseteste). Thomas of Chobham in his *Summa de arte praedicandi*, although he considers preaching to be the duty of all those who have *cura animarum*, concedes that it may sometimes have to be at a very basic level; there are 'multi [. . .] simplices sacerdotes, qui non nouerunt profunda misteria sacre Scripture', and these are not to be condemned 'dummodo

⁴⁷ Joseph Goering, 'The Changing Face of the Village Parish II: The Thirteenth Century', in *Pathways to Medieval Peasants*, ed. by J. A. Raftis, Papers in Mediaeval Studies, 2 (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981), pp. 323–33.

⁴⁸ Goering, 'Changing Face of the Village Parish', p. 328.

⁴⁹ Goering, 'Changing Face of the Village Parish', p. 330.

⁵⁰ Morenzoni, *Des Écoles aux paroisses*, p. 150, notes that in many cases 'le titre de magister indiquait sans doute qu'ils avaient fréquenté pendant quelques années une école, sans cependant qu'on puisse dire quoi que ce soit ni sur le type, ni sur le niveau de la formation qu'ils y avaient reçus'.

⁵¹ See Morenzoni, *Des Écoles aux paroisses*, pp. 148–50.

tantum sciant uitia reprehendere et fidem et bonos mores astruere, saltem uerbis simplicibus'.⁵²

It is still possible that the Trinity and Lambeth collections were compiled for the minority of parish priests who could have made good use of them; the obligation of those with *cura animarum* to preach is emphasized in Trinity 33 ('eche hehe dai fede mid Godes worde þe hungrie soule þe haued to witen'),⁵³ and may also be implied in Trinity 26 / Lambeth 13.⁵⁴ But there is no explicit textual indication of this, and some of the internal evidence of the sermons they contain suggests a pastoral context other than 'the parish priest and his congregation'.

Even the material most obviously appropriate for parish use is sometimes phrased in a way which suggests a speaking *persona* other than the parish priest. The shared sermon on the creed (Trinity 4 / Lambeth 7) includes the sentence, 'Alle cunne ower crede þas te Ich wene, þeih ge alle nuten hwat hit biqueðe, ac lusted nu and undernimeð hit, and Ich wille tache eu bi Godes fultume';⁵⁵ the phrase 'þas te Ich wene' ('as I understand') suggests an outside speaker assuming (or at least hoping) that the parish priest has done his job of basic catechetical instruction, rather than the parish priest himself. Similarly, in the sermons on confession in both manuscripts, the priest / confessor is normally referred to in the third person, as in Trinity 9–13 (e.g. Trinity 11, 'we agen, ure synnes menende, to shewen hem þe preste and bi his wissingge beten hem syððen')⁵⁶ and Lambeth 2 and 3.

There are also a couple of references in Trinity B. 14. 52 to delivery outside a parish context. Some of the Trinity and Lambeth sermons do not specify their place of delivery, mention it only unspecifically (as in Trinity 27's *herinne*, which implies no more than that the sermon is not preached outdoors), or use the generic term *chirche*; but there are a couple of uses in the Trinity sermons of the more specific term *minster*, which in Middle English normally refers to a monastic, cathedral, or collegiate church⁵⁷ (as in the reference in Trinity 11 to the bishop

⁵² Thomas of Chobham, *Summa de arte praedicandi*, Ch. 3, ed. by Morenzoni, p. 57.

⁵³ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 215.

⁵⁴ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 155; *Old English Homilies, First Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 135.

⁵⁵ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 17. I have followed Morris's suggested explanation of MS 'þas te' as = *þas þe*. The text in the Lambeth version (*Old English Homilies, First Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 75) has 'leste þet'.

⁵⁶ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 65.

⁵⁷ See *MED* s.v. *minster*.

expelling those doing solemn penance from the cathedral church at the beginning of Lent: ‘Swo doð todai ech bishup þe in his minster [MS minister] beð, driueð ut þo forsinegede men þe habbeð þo sinnes don þe biliggeð to here shrifte’.⁵⁸ In Trinity 18, the preacher says that St James sent out his epistle ‘into chirchen, and hit is cumen into þis holi minstre todai’;⁵⁹ and in Trinity 20, the preacher prays that St Paul may gather the congregation’s hearts to pure thoughts, ‘alse he gaderede þe holie apostles in þe temple, and hure lichames in þis holie minstre’.⁶⁰

Although some of the Trinity and Lambeth sermons include no indication of a specific audience, the internal evidence of others suggests a variety of audiences. Most commonly it points towards a lay audience. In Trinity 18, although the sermon as recorded includes a substantial amount of Latin, the preacher says of the epistle for the day, ‘hit is [. . .] biforen giu rad þeh ge it ne understonden. Ac we wilen bi Godes wissinge and bi his helpe þer-of cuþen giu þese lit word’.⁶¹ Sermons in both collections denounce such distinctively lay sins as marital infidelity, non-payment of tithes, and non-attendance at church; and Lambeth 1 and 2 draw attention to the mixed nature of their audience, addressing the congregation as ‘leoue broðre and sestre’.⁶² A few sermons, however, seem to be addressing both clergy and laity. One of the five shared sermons, Trinity 26 / Lambeth 13, uses a three-part biblical *distinctio* on the word *semen* (*hominis progenituram, verbum Dei, bonum opus*) to address first the laity (on where and when they should beget children), then the clergy (on where and when they should preach), then both together (on almsgiving). In its introduction, probably based on its Latin model, it draws attention to these shifts of focus within the sermon, implying that its approach is based on apostolic precedent: ‘Ure louerd Seinte Poul, hegest alre lorþew after ure helende seluen, specð on þe Holi Boc, and minezeð eiðer hodede and lewede to Godes wordes and to weldede, *specialiter*

⁵⁸ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 61. The sermon is probably based on a later twelfth-century Latin reworking of a sermon by Geoffrey Babion (d. 1158), Archbishop of Bordeaux; see Millett, ‘Discontinuity of English Prose’, p. 1 and n. 10. The practice of solemn penance survived in England into the late thirteenth century; see Mary Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), pp. 92–95.

⁵⁹ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 105.

⁶⁰ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 119.

⁶¹ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 105.

⁶² Lambeth 1, *Old English Homilies, First Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 5; also Lambeth 2, p. 23.

quidem monens nos,⁶³ *ut ait Gregorius, ad sancte predicationis officium, generaliter uero nos et illos ad salutarem obedienciam mandatorum*. Hodede he mineȝeð wel to leren [lewe]de, and lewede feir and clene lif to leden, and seið þat ech man shal understonden mede of his er dede.⁶⁴ Trinity 6, on the Nativity, similarly addresses laity and clergy in turn, interpreting the shepherds as ‘þe lorþeawes of holi chiriche [...] also bisshupes and prestes’ and their flocks as the laity, whom they feed on ‘þe gode word of Holi Boc’.⁶⁵ Another of the shared sermons, Trinity 25 / Lambeth 17, concludes (though in the Trinity version only), ‘Swo we agen alle to don, boðe lerede and lewede’.⁶⁶ One sermon, Trinity 27, seems to be addressed primarily to a clerical audience. Part of it is based on a text, *Erit sicut populus sacerdos*, which had been used since patristic times to denounce the failings of the contemporary clergy,⁶⁷ but the homilist adds a more modern element in his description of the priest who dresses his mistress better than his altar:

‘Prest sal leden his lif also lewede mæn’; and swo hie doð nuðe and sumdel werse. For þe lewede man wurðeð his spuse mid cloðes more þane mid him seluen, and prest naht s[wo h]is chireche þe is his spuse, ac his daie, þe is his hore, awlencð hire mid cloðes more þan him seluen. Ðe chire[che] cloðes ben to brokene and ealde, and hise wiues shule ben hole and newe; his alter-cloð great and sole, and hire chemise smal and hwit, and te albe sol and hire smoc hwit; þe haued-line sward and hire winpel wit, oðer maked geleu mid safran.⁶⁸

⁶³ Lambeth 13 has *hos*[...] *hos* for Trinity *nos* [...] *nos*; in Trinity, the second *nos* has been altered in the manuscript from *hos*. If the Trinity 26 reading reflects the original, it may provide a further example of an address in the Latin model to a ‘proximate audience’ (see above).

⁶⁴ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 153. Morris emends *to lerende* to *to lerende* [lewede]; but the equivalent passage in Lambeth 13 suggests that the original had an infinitive, *to leren*, paralleling the following *to leden*, and that *lewe* has been omitted by eyeskip. I have not been able to trace the reference to Gregory.

⁶⁵ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 39.

⁶⁶ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 153.

⁶⁷ See Gregory I, *Homiliae in Evangelia*, Bk 1, Hom. 17, PL 76, 1146 (Gregory’s homily is addressed to bishops).

⁶⁸ *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 163. The sinfulness of yellow wimples seems to have preoccupied clerics in this period; cf. Lambeth 5 on women’s clothing, ‘þe heolowe clað is þes deofles helfter’ (*Old English Homilies, First Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 53), and the prohibition of *mulieres cum peplis croceis* from entering church in the 1229 Worcester statutes of Bishop William of Blois (*Councils and Synods: with Other Documents Relating to the English Church*, vol. II: A.D. 1205–1313, pt 1: 1205–1265, ed. by F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 175).

A contemporary parallel to this passage can be found in the fifth model sermon of Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi*, where Alexander denounces priests who have done well out of the Church ('Quam multi sunt quorum unusquisque habet duas aut tres ecclesias [...] quam multi sunt ditissimi de patrimonio crucifixi') but spend their money on women rather than books; even if they do own books, 'ueteres sunt et uiles et omni ornatu carent. Set tamen ancille et filie eorum circumornate sunt ut similitudo templi'.⁶⁹

The Trinity sermon then moves on to denounce the impact of such bad examples on the laity, and the degeneracy of the world in general; but even this (much briefer) section seems directed at a clerical audience, structuring part of its argument around an extended quotation from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.⁷⁰

These kinds of internal evidence suggest a pastoral context for vernacular preaching not limited to the parish church. Most of the sermons in the Trinity and Lambeth collections are what David d'Avray has called 'second tier' or 'supracatechetical' preaching, based on the annual cycle of liturgical readings rather than on a programme of basic catechetical instruction, and 'quasi-artistic' in style.⁷¹ In the period in which they were produced, this kind of preaching is more likely to have taken place, or at least been initiated, at diocesan than at parish level. The canons of the Fourth Lateran Council suggest that the primary responsibility for preaching to the laity was still seen in 1215 as resting with the bishops; Canon 27 of the Fourth Lateran Council, *De Instructione ordinandorum*, specifies only that priests who have *cura animarum* should be competent to conduct services and administer the sacraments,⁷² and although Canon 10 recommends greater delegation of the episcopal responsibility for preaching, it is only to 'viros idoneos [...] potentes in opere et sermone, qui plebes [...] visitantes, eas verbo aedificent et exemplo'.⁷³ Although a series of English episcopal statutes following the Fourth Lateran Council gave at least modest encouragement to the development of preaching at parish level, the main emphasis in these statutes, as in the canons of

⁶⁹ Alexander of Ashby, *De artificioso modo predicandi*, ed. by Morenzoni, in CCCM, 188, p. 65.

⁷⁰ *Metamorphoses*, Book 1, lines 144–48; see *Old English Homilies, Second Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 165. For other instances of classical quotations in the Trinity sermons (13, 29, and 30) see Millett, 'Discontinuity of English Prose', p. 7 and n. 73.

⁷¹ See d'Avray, *Preaching of the Friars*, pp. 64–65, 82–90.

⁷² See further Goering, *William de Montibus*, pp. 76–77.

⁷³ *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. by Alberigo and others, p. 215.

the Council, was on the responsibility of local priests for administering the sacraments.⁷⁴

There were two possible ways in which the episcopal responsibility for preaching might be discharged: either by involving the laity in the preaching which took place in and around the cathedral, or through visitations by the bishop and his assistants to other parts of the diocese. An illustration of the former is provided by Goering in his discussion of William de Montibus's responsibilities as Chancellor of Lincoln. The earliest specific description of the Chancellor's responsibilities dates from after William's death in 1213: the 1236 Lincoln statutes specify that he should preach in the cathedral when the choir is present, to the clerics in chapter every Sunday, to the people (*populo*) on twelve specified days, and on five days when solemn processions took place outside the cathedral, at a station along the route. There is some evidence, however, that William's duties were at least similar; Goering notes that 'William's sermons preserve some indication of these various settings and of the preaching appropriate to each'.⁷⁵ The fullest records of pastoral visitations are also relatively late; but again there are some indications that the practices described may have been initiated earlier. Robert Grosseteste reports how after he became Bishop of Lincoln in 1235, he introduced a circuit of visitations to the rural deaneries; 'congregatis autem clero et populo, egomet ut pluries proponebam verbum dei clero, et aliquis frater predicator aut minor populo. Et iiii^{or} fratres consequenter audiebant confessiones et iniungebant penitentias'.⁷⁶ He makes it clear that his practice was an innovation for the Lincoln diocese, but

⁷⁴ See Morenzoni, *Des Écoles aux paroisses*, pp. 164–71, and note 76 below.

⁷⁵ See Goering, *William de Montibus*, pp. 19–20.

⁷⁶ *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Powicke and Cheney, p. 265. In a letter to the Archdeacon of Lincoln written c. 1237–38, instructing him to make arrangements for these visitations, he explains his purpose in preaching to the local clergy, in terms echoing Canon 10 of the Fourth Lateran Council but apparently extending the line of responsibility for preaching down to parish level: 'rectoribus ecclesiarum, vicariis, et sacerdotibus parochialibus per singulos decanatus coram nobis congregatis, ipsis verbum dei predicemus, instruantes eosdem qualiter populum sibi subiectum verbo doceant et conversationis sue exemplo informant ut quod per nosmetipsos implere non possumus saltem eorum ministerio quoquomodo faciamus' (*Councils and Synods*, ed. by Powicke and Cheney, p. 263). It is likely, however, that the content of their preaching would have been limited. The phrasing of his statutes (1239?) suggests that he had very modest expectations of the knowledge of his parish priests, which seems to have been barely above the level desirable for their parishioners: they should be familiar with the ten commandments, the seven deadly sins, the seven sacraments (*saltem simpliciter*), and the administration of confession and baptism, and should have some understanding (*saltem simplicem*) of the articles of faith contained in the various forms of the creed (see *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Powicke and Cheney, p. 268).

something like it seems to have been expected elsewhere, if only intermittently implemented, earlier in the thirteenth century; Thomas of Chobham in his *Summa de arte praedicandi* complains that ‘fere nullus episcopus est qui tenetur predicare, qui circueat parochias suas et predicat in locis diuersis [. . .] Tales nescimus excusare, nisi forte bonos substituant predicatores quos mittant per uaria loca ad predicandum. Bonus autem pastor circuit dyocesim suam et facit conuenire in uno loco decem uel plures parochias et ibi predicat in uno die, et postea similiter in aliis locis.’⁷⁷

Both models suggest a much greater possible variety of both contexts and users for these sermons than the parish priest addressing his congregation in the local church. They might have been preached by cathedral clerics, or by external *uari idonei* invited to deputize for them (who in this period may have included monks or regular canons, rather than the friars who later took over this function). Their audiences might have included different types of laity, not only simple country parishioners needing instruction in even the basic articles of the faith, but a possibly more sophisticated urban congregation. (D’Avray explains the rapid development of popular preaching in late twelfth-century Paris by the emergence of a more educated lay audience.)⁷⁸ They might also have included clerics, whether parish priests (who might themselves have only a basic level of education) or cathedral clergy, addressed either separately or as part of a mixed lay and clerical audience. There is some evidence in the sermons in the Trinity and Lambeth collections that they were addressed (to adapt the wording of Trinity 30) *tum ad clericos, tum ad populum, tum ad hos et illos*. A diocesan pastoral context of this kind might account for the diversity of the sermons in the Trinity and Lambeth collections; and its more cosmopolitan cultural *milieu* would help to explain their incorporation of both recent developments in continental preaching and (in the case of Lambeth 487) preaching material inherited from an older native tradition.

It is possible that this shared context also links them with a rather later group of Middle English works, the *Ancrene Wisse* group. In a recent survey article on the works of the group,⁷⁹ I proposed a new theory of origin which attempted to account for their combination of older native and contemporary continental stylistic influences. This ‘unified theory’ saw the works of the Group as the product of a post-1215 pastoral context in which reforming bishops in the West

⁷⁷ Thomas of Chobham, *Summa de arte praedicandi*, Ch. 3, ed. by Morenzoni, p. 68.

⁷⁸ D’Avray, *Preaching of the Friars*, pp. 29–30.

⁷⁹ Bella Millett, ‘The *Ancrene Wisse* Group’, in *A Companion to Middle English Prose*, ed. by A. S. G. Edwards (Cambridge: Brewer, 2004), pp. 1–17.

Midlands, working in conjunction with the friars, acted as catalysts for the production of devotional literature in the vernacular, drawing simultaneously on the native tradition of vernacular religious prose and newer continental Latin models. The internal evidence of the Trinity and Lambeth collections suggests that this 'unified theory' might need to be extended to cover other works, and to include the period before as well as after the Fourth Lateran Council. The Trinity collection, the Lambeth collection, and the works of the *Ancrene Wisse* group could be seen as marking consecutive, and to some extent connected, stages of a revival of vernacular religious prose produced by a broader English movement of pastoral reform, dating back at least to the Third Lateran Council of 1179.

The five shared sermons in the Trinity and Lambeth collections must belong to the twelfth-century stage of this development; their terminus ante quem is fixed by the palaeographical dating of Trinity B. 14. 52, whose hands have been described by Ralph Hanna as belonging 'solidly and unequivocally' to the second half of the twelfth century.⁸⁰ Since Trinity B. 14. 52 and Lambeth 487 were produced in different parts of the country, and their texts of the five sermons do not seem to be directly related, it is possible that their shared material reflects an attempt (whether official or unofficial) to share good practice in preaching across dioceses through the circulation of Latin 'model sermons'.⁸¹

Lambeth 487, though difficult to date precisely, is probably later than Trinity B. 14. 52; Ralph Hanna has commented, 'it certainly might be s. xiii, not especially advanced (but *perhaps* as late as 1225)'.⁸² The only clue which might suggest a particular date as a terminus a quo is the opening to Lambeth 3: '[I]n leinten time uwilc mon gað to scrifte; þer beoð summe þe — mare herm is! — gað alswa Ich nuþe eow tellen wulle. He seið mi[d] þa muðe þet nis naut in his heorte. "Ic wulle gan to scrifte for scome, alswa doð oðer men — 3if Ic forlete, þe preost me walde eskien on Ester Dei hwa me scriue er he me 3efe husul — and ec for monne weordes ðinge."⁸³ It is possible that this reflects the successful enforcement of Canon 21 of the Fourth Lateran Council, which required at least annual confession and communion from every Christian on pain of excommunication: 'Omnis utriusque sexus fidelis [. . .] omnia sua solus peccata confiteatur fideliter, saltem

⁸⁰ Personal communication, 2004.

⁸¹ David d'Avray has suggested that, given the relatively advanced nature of the preaching aids produced in England in this period (see above), the Latin sermons underlying the five shared sermons may themselves have been of English origin (personal communication, 26 August 2004).

⁸² Personal communication, 2004.

⁸³ *Old English Homilies, First Series*, ed. by Morris, p. 25.

semel in anno proprio sacerdote, et iniunctam sibi poenitentiam studeat pro viribus adimplere, suscipiens reverenter ad minus in pascha eucharistiae sacramentum [...]. Si quis autem alieno sacerdoti voluerit iusta de causa sua confiteri peccata, licentiam prius postulet et obtineat a proprio sacerdote, cum aliter ille ipsum non possit solvere vel ligare.’⁸⁴ But since this decree was a powerful reinforcement, rather than a replacement, of existing custom,⁸⁵ the correspondences are not conclusive proof of a post-1215 date.

In spite of its probably later date, the Lambeth collection, with its borrowings from Ælfric and Wulfstan I, shows a more obvious debt to Anglo-Saxon religious prose than the Trinity collection, probably because of its West Midlands provenance. Its combination of older and newer elements was discussed by Celia Sisam in a 1951 article, ‘The Scribal Tradition of the Lambeth Homilies’. She deduced from orthographical variation in the text that the scribe of Lambeth 487 ‘was copying the work of at least two different scribes’,⁸⁶ and divided the sermons accordingly into ‘Group A’ (sermons 1–5, 9–13) and ‘Group B’ (sermons 7–8, 14–17, and the *Poema morale*); sermon 6 (the rhyming exposition of the pater-noster), which is orthographically intermediate between Groups A and B, she assigned tentatively to B. Since the orthographic divisions fell between sermons (rather than occurring at random, as would normally be the case in a single manuscript copied by two scribes), she suggested that ‘the Lambeth scribe drew his material from at least two different manuscripts [...] Group A from X, Group B from Y’.⁸⁷ She argued that although the dialect of X and Y indicated the same West Midlands localization, X was the older of the two, partly on the grounds of its more conservative orthography, partly because it included the four sermons drawing on Anglo-Saxon sources; Y, on the other hand, included both the two Middle English rhyming pieces, which were probably of south-eastern origin. On this interpretation, the scribe of Lambeth 487 (who Sisam assumed was a parish priest, drawing on other ‘parish sermon collections’) was also its compiler and responsible for its combination of older and newer material. But Sisam missed one of the sermons shared with Trinity B. 14. 52, Lambeth 13, which occurs not in ‘Group B’ but ‘Group A’. Since some of the other material in ‘Group A’ also seems to be relatively modern, particularly Lambeth 5, which includes some material

⁸⁴ *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, ed. by Alberigo and others, p. 221.

⁸⁵ See Tentler, *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation*, pp. 20–22.

⁸⁶ Sisam, ‘Scribal Tradition of the Lambeth Homilies’, p. 107.

⁸⁷ Sisam, ‘Scribal Tradition of the Lambeth Homilies’, p. 109.

most closely paralleled in thirteenth-century Latin sermon literature⁸⁸ and also (as she notes) a significant amount of French vocabulary,⁸⁹ her interpretation of the evidence may need to be reconsidered. In the first place, X's more traditional orthography may not indicate an earlier date, only a more thorough standardization of its spelling on older models;⁹⁰ most of the distinctively conservative features of X cited by Sisam (the retention of OE *cw*, *h* finally and before *t*, *eo* for OE long and short *eo*, and *ea* for OE long and short *ea*) recur well into the thirteenth century in manuscripts of the *Ancrene Wisse* group, as features of 'language AB'. In the second place, the occurrence of sermons shared with Trinity B. 14. 52 across both groups suggests that the scribes of X and Y, even if they were not both working on the same manuscript, were working in the same place, with access to the same material. The content of 'Group A' shows that the combination of newer and more traditional preaching material was already taking place in a West Midlands context before Lambeth 487 was copied; and the incorporation in Lambeth 2 of a passage from Wulfstan into a much more 'modern' sermon on penance suggests that it entailed not simply the supplementation of older sermon-collections by newer material but a more active process of integration.

On this reading of the evidence, the contents of Lambeth 487 could be seen as reflecting not simply the 'last flicker' of an older native preaching tradition, but a more forward-looking exploitation of this tradition, as in the works of the *Ancrene Wisse* group, to respond to new pastoral requirements. The dialect of Lambeth 487 places it in the same West Midlands area as the early manuscripts of the *Ancrene Wisse* group, and a later hand, dating from the mid-thirteenth century, has added at the end of the manuscript (fols 65^v–67^r) an incomplete copy of the *Ureisun of ure Louerde*; it is possible that the Lambeth collection and the works of the *Ancrene Wisse* group were successive products of the same diocesan *milieu*.

Helen Spencer has said of the Middle English sermon tradition, "There will perhaps always be an element of informed speculation in discussing the history of

⁸⁸ See the parallels with Odo of Cheriton and James of Vitry drawn in *Selections from Early Middle English 1130–1250: Part 2: Notes*, ed. by Joseph Hall (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920), pp. 421–27.

⁸⁹ Sisam, 'Scribal Tradition of the Lambeth Homilies', p. 108, n. 3.

⁹⁰ See Merja Black, 'AB or simply A? Reconsidering the Case for a Standard', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 100 (1999), 155–74. Black questions the assumption of direct orthographical 'continuity' in the West Midlands from an earlier written standard, arguing rather that later scribes aiming at standardization resorted to Old English manuscripts as a model: 'In the case of the Southwest-Midlands texts of the EME period, it may be assumed that the most immediately available conventions consisted of adaptations of the LWS tradition' (p. 161).

vernacular preaching at this time', and has characterized its history in the early Middle English period as particularly 'obscure'.⁹¹ It is true that the surviving evidence is limited, particularly for the period before the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, and that there are limits to the amount of speculation that it can support. But in the case of the Trinity and Lambeth collections, there is more evidence available, both internal and external, than has sometimes been assumed — certainly enough to inform speculation about their probable pastoral context. The 'unified theory' of origin outlined here attempts to locate them within the broader historical developments in preaching and pastoral reform taking place during the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, and proposes a context of diocesan preaching to account for features which would otherwise be difficult to explain, including their mixture of catechetical and 'second tier' preaching, sermons addressed *tum ad clericos, tum ad populum, tum ad hos et illos*, and their use (in spite of their geographical separation) of five shared sermons showing the influence of the most recent developments in preaching technique.

The traditional scholarly reading of the Trinity and Lambeth collections as 'backward-looking' may say less about the sermons themselves than about their readers. Traditionally, the study of early Middle English sermons has concentrated on their relationship to pre-Conquest religious prose, and there has been a tendency for scholars to assume that those who produced them were similarly backward-looking, more concerned with the preservation of earlier native traditions than with responding to newer continental influences. Celia Sisam's image of the scribe of Lambeth 487 as a local priest, preserving the 'last flicker' of an older tradition in his West Midlands parish, has much in common with R. W. Chambers's 1932 location of 'the continuity of English prose' in a sequence of devotional works written 'for or by those who had withdrawn to cloister or hermitage, in search of a peace which they could not find in feudal England'.⁹² The evidence suggests, however, that the Trinity and Lambeth collections emerged from a less marginal, more dynamic pastoral context, and that their incorporation of older material should be seen (as Elaine Treharne has suggested) as part of an active response to contemporary developments in preaching and pastoral care.

⁹¹ Spencer, 'Middle English Sermons', p. 616.

⁹² R. W. Chambers, 'On the Continuity of English Prose from Alfred to More and his School', from the Introduction to *The Life and Death of St Thomas Moore . . . By Nicholas Harpsfield [Harpsfield's Life of More]*, ed. by Elsie Vaughan Hitchcock, EETS, o.s., 186 (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), p. clxxii.

Part Two
The Early Fourteenth Century

COMPILATION AND PURPOSE IN MS HARLEY 2253

Susanna Fein

The remarkable nature of the contents of BL, MS Harley 2253 has led to speculation over the years about what sort of person would have gathered up such a rich array of texts — many preserved only here — in three languages, from diverse places, and of mixed type, and would then, furthermore, have pursued the scribal and compilational labour of making from this material a whole book. In 1912 Edward Bliss Reed described the compiler in rosy terms:

We know that he loved nature; that he had been stirred by patriotism; and that he had felt the charm of youth and romance. Whether or not he composed any of these poems (their dialects show different hands), his tastes reveal a poetic temperament, for the MS. is nothing more or less than a book in which the writer has copied whatever interested him. There is no attempt at arrangement; Latin, English, Anglo-Norman — prose and verse, hymn, love song, patriotic ballad — follow each other at haphazard.¹

While most scholars today would not subscribe to so fanciful a portrait, we may discern in this passage Reed's attempt to assess the evidence honestly and, in this, following the lead set by Humfrey Wanley that Harley is a book 'upon several Subjects, partly in Old French, partly in Latin, and partly in old English, partly in Verse & partly in Prose'.² Where Reed errs most grievously, though, is not in his romantic imaginings but in his estimation of the scribe's compilational actions. In perceiving a selection process driven solely by private whim ('whatever

¹ Edward Bliss Reed, *English Lyrical Poetry from its Origins to the Present Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1912), pp. 53–54.

² H. Wanley, D. Casley, and others, *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum* (1759; rev. and repr. 4 vols, London: British Museum, 1808–12), II, 585. The Harley scribe's redaction is reproduced in N. R. Ker, intro., *Facsimile of British Museum MS. Harley 2253*, EETS, o.s., 255 (London: Oxford University Press, 1965).

interested him') and with 'no attempt at arrangement', Reed was quite wrong about the Harley scribe.

The most extraordinary aspect of this literary artefact from pre-1350 Ludlow rests not in its individual items — though present are works of exquisite emotive utterance, political-historical rarity, and notoriously unrestrained ribaldry — but rather in two salient facts about its formation: (1) that the book's contents were *selected* from a larger store of available materials (about which we may only guess), and (2) that they are typically *arranged* in ways both local and large. What Harley 2253 preserves is the creative energy of a compiler-scribe working as an artist — perhaps a better term is 'producer' — with an evident plan towards recitation, performance, or other practical use (such as preaching or counsel) in a multilingual and social setting.³ In order to discern how the scribe selected and arranged items, my method here is to follow the book evidence where it leads us without attempting to force a pattern upon it. No single plan or rule of operation — whether thematic, stylistic, or linguistic — characterizes all of the Harley manuscript. The evidence does not adhere to a simple, unified theory, nor does this *compilatio* frame acts of storytelling within tellers and move them towards Canterbury. Thus the frequent comparisons made by Harley commentators to Chaucer's masterwork must always be accompanied by severe qualifiers.⁴ The Ludlow scribe, working fifty years earlier, in a much different milieu, had no such model in mind, and moreover, storytelling was not his primary mode or purpose. His mental model appears to have had more to do with hall entertainments in the style of a minstrel and edifications in the manner of a chaplain, all enlarged by an engaged

³ The terms *Harley scribe* and *compiler* refer to the Ludlow scribe who copied fols 49–140. This usage conforms to recent practice by others, although I am extending it (as do most scholars implicitly) to include compilational responsibility. Because three scribal hands appear in the manuscript, this scribe is sometimes called 'Scribe B'. Scribe A copied the French religious material of fols 1–48 (not reproduced in the facsimile), and Scribe C copied the paint recipes on fol. 52^v.

⁴ See, for example, Carter Revard, 'The Wife of Bath's Grandmother: Or, How Gilote Showed her Friend Johane that the Wages of Sin Is Worldly Pleasure, and How Both Then Preached This Gospel throughout England and Ireland', *Chaucer Review*, 39 (2004), 117–36 (pp. 119–24); Thorlac Turville-Petre, *England the Nation: Language, Literature, and National Identity, 1290–1340* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 181–217 (p. 211); Marilyn Corrie, 'Kings and Kingship in British Library MS Harley 2253', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 33 (2003), 64–79 (p. 79); and Barbara Nolan, 'Anthologizing Ribaldry: Four Anglo-Norman Fabliaux', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript: The Scribes, Contents, and Social Contexts of British Library MS Harley 2253*, ed. by Susanna Fein (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), pp. 289–327 (p. 327).

sense of affairs in the region, nation, and world beyond England. Reading closely the content of each item and the contextual juxtapositions, Carter Revard has hypothesized a principle of contrasts, of *sic et non*, as the scribe's rationale. My emphasis is somewhat different. Guided by details of compilation, I will sidestep, by and large, issues of theme and style (an author's purview) in favour of spatial layout and verbally linked openings and endings. The assumption I make is that the compiler laboured as an artistic arranger of whole texts, a managing editor who sought to control how specific pieces were presented in sequence and by visual layout. Such an assumption conforms to the findings, large and small, by others, as well as to the consensus that has arisen from these findings. My goal is to describe from these operations the general working principles of the Harley compiler.

Compilation and Local Effects

Middle English scholars seem now to have reached rough consensus that the Harley scribe's compilation (on fols 49–140) is unusually deliberative in its selections and organization. Nonetheless, we are still at a point in the study of Harley 2253 where we know the parts better than the whole. Statements about the codicological nature of Harley and its scribe's working method typically arise in investigations of either a specific topic or a local effect. For example, in an insightful study of the manuscript's politics of 'authority and resistance', John Scattergood observes that the manuscript

is organized to a degree. Though its contents may be miscellaneous, they are set out, locally at least, in a manner that suggests that someone thought seriously about their interrelationships. [...] It] looks as though it is organized and effected without substantial changes of mind or direction.⁵

In other topical studies, Michael Kuczynski has looked at religious texts, Karl Reichl at debates, Helen Phillips at dream visions, and Marilyn Corrie at kings and kingship.⁶ Others have scrutinized the scribe's quire-length arrangements. The newest such study appears elsewhere in this volume: Revard, discoverer of the

⁵ John Scattergood, 'Authority and Resistance: The Political Verse', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 163–201 (pp. 167–68).

⁶ Michael P. Kuczynski, 'An "Electric Stream": The Religious Contents', Karl Reichl, 'Debate Verse', and Helen Phillips, 'Dreams and Dream Lore', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 123–61, 219–39, and 241–59, respectively; and Corrie, 'Kings and Kingship'.

Ludlow scribe's provenance and likely milieu, analyses how the scribe combined the political with the penitential in Quire 6, and how this quire attaches to Quires 1–5. In addition, in the recent collection *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, Barbara Nolan discusses the fabliaux and debates on women found in Quires 12–14, and I demonstrate how a verbal-thematic pattern connects the lyric and non-lyric texts of Quire 7.⁷ There are other recent commentators who note that scribal arrangements in Harley produce effects that fully merit the term *literary*: 'the meaning of individual texts is developed by the context in which they are placed. They do not just say what they themselves have to say, but enter into a dialogic discourse, which further enjoins the reader or listener to think about and interpret them'.⁸

While articles on individual Harley lyrics or textual clusters do not pretend to pull together a comprehensive understanding of the whole book, there are instances where focused investigations of key points in the manuscript have illuminated a generally neglected aspect of the scribe's compilational method. I will here highlight four of these studies, each of which elucidates one or more English lyrics in context. In 1954 Stuart H. L. Degginger deduced the shape of the exemplar for *A Wayle Whyt ase Whalles Bon*.⁹ When this poem, copied in a confused way, is rearranged to retrieve its metre and sense, it becomes evident that the Harley scribe copied it from a single leaf and accidentally started with the verso rather than the recto. Degginger suggests that the front side of the leaf included the music, refrain, and opening lines. The lyric is therefore disordered, the refrain is obscured, and, as is the scribe's practice everywhere in Harley, the music is omitted. Numerous editors have accepted and printed Degginger's reconstructed lyric (or variants of it), but his smart deduction about the scribe's exemplar and working method has not been adopted into our thinking about the formation of Harley 2253. We need to understand that many short items —

⁷ Nolan 'Anthologizing Ribaldry'; and Susanna Fein, 'A Saint "Geynest under Gore": Marina and the Love Lyrics of the Seventh Quire', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 351–76. For a chart of the independent blocks, quires, and contents of Harley 2253, see pp. 371–76.

⁸ John Hines, *Voices in the Past: English Literature and Archaeology* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2004), pp. 71–104 (pp. 95–96). See also Turville-Petre, *England the Nation*, p. 211; and John Scatill, 'Trilingualism in Early Middle English Miscellanies: Languages and Literature', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 33 (2003), 18–32 (p. 32).

⁹ Stuart H. L. Degginger, 'A Wayle Whyt ase Whalles Bon' — Reconstructed', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 53 (1954), 84–90.

religious, secular, and even political — were probably collected on single sheets or rolls and that several had tunes that the scribe did not preserve in the manuscript. He likely had ready access to the music by other means, such as the leaflets themselves, or a familiarity based in memory.¹⁰

Mindful that lyrics are musical, Richard Firth Green has identified how two other Harley items, the *Litel Wot Hit Any Mon* poems, follow a literary fashion in Europe for devising *contrafacta*, that is, lyrics taking their opening lines and music from a known model and converting the model to a new theme (often secular to religious), sometimes a new language. Competitions to create *contrafacta* were evidently associated in France with the traditions of the puy, and Green notes how the layout of folio 128^r ‘suggests that the English compiler was particularly eager to draw attention to the fashionable parallelism between the two pieces’.¹¹ It is therefore not surprising to find the fashion migrating to England when, for example, ‘around 1260 a *jeu-parti* held at the Arras Puy [...] was judged by no less distinguished a guest than Edward I of England’, a king mentioned frequently in Harley 2253’s political poems, and who most certainly would have had English courtiers in attendance with him.¹² A puy did exist in London, and some of its members, Green notes, had likely spread the fashion to the north Midlands dialect region of the *Litel Wot Hit Any Mon* poems. The broader implications of Green’s research rest not just in seeing the continental influences that affect the book, which are evident in other ways, but also in recognizing the scribe’s interest in metrical/musical form. At other points in Harley, the scribe has grouped lyrics for metre, for example, in nos 42–43 and 64–66.

A third local argument pertains to one of these metrical groups, the pairing of *Spring* with *Advice to Women* on folio 71^v. That these poems form a diptych has frequently been noted, though here the scribe uses a columnar layout rather than

¹⁰ See also Thomas Wright on how a political song associated with Simon de Montfort’s cause was preserved on a roll (*Political Songs of England: From the Reign of John to that of Edward II*, ed. by Peter Coss (1839; repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 356); but compare, too, the linguistic findings of Frances McSparran, ‘The Language of the English Poems: The Harley Scribe and his Exemplars’, in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 391–426 (pp. 417–18), showing that there were certainly many different manuscript exemplars.

¹¹ Richard Firth Green, ‘The Two “Litel Wot Hit Any Mon” Lyrics in Harley 2253’, *Mediaeval Studies*, 51 (1989), 304–12 (p. 311). On the traditions of the puy, see Marcia L. Colish, *Medieval Foundations of the Western Intellectual Tradition 400–1400* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997; repr. 1998), p. 210.

¹² Green, ‘Two “Litel Wot Hit Any Mon” Lyrics’, p. 311.

the top–bottom style of the *Litel Wot Hit Any Mon* poems. Moreover, while the metres do correspond, the first lines do not. The opening line that matches that of *Spring* is to be found in the Auchinleck manuscript (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MS 19. 2. 1) debate poem *The Thrush and the Nightingale*; the 'nyhtegales' and 'þrestelcoc' in *Spring*'s first stanza also recall that poem. What we apparently have is a triad of related poems, two of them copied by the Harley scribe as *contrafacta* that express the pleasure and pain caused by women, as debated in the longer poem.¹³ In 1999 Joseph Dane proposed a radical reinterpretation of the scribal layout of these poems, taking to task the 'extremist New Critical assumptions' of editors who separate them.¹⁴ Each has four stanzas copied on folio 71^v, and *Advice*'s last stanza appears at the top left column of folio 72^r. Dane reads here a 'textual instability' such that we may apply the last stanza to *either* poem. This understanding of the layout is overly ingenious, not just because it overlooks tone and style, but also because little ambiguity exists.¹⁵ Although Dane's conclusion might be doubted, he is quite right to point out that to read Harley 2253 properly is to read layout with content. By recognizing scribal signs, we will understand more accurately the compiler's considerations for selection and arrangement of material.

Reading layout very closely, Seth Lerer focuses on the sole page in Harley that displays three entire lyric texts (fol. 76^r).¹⁶ At its head is *A Spring Song on the Passion*, the French *Ferroy chaunson que bien deit estre oye* follows, and it ends with the trilingual *Dum ludis floribus*. Each poem is written as prose, though line divisions are marked, and in appearance the page looks, according to Lerer, like the student *tabula* named in the last stanza of the third poem: 'Scripsi hec carmina

¹³ Susanna Fein, 'XXVII. The Lyrics of MS Harley 2253', in *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050–1500*, ed. by J. Burke Severs, Albert E. Hartung, and Peter G. Beidler, 11 vols (New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1967–2005), xi, 4168–4206, 4311–61 (pp. 4183–86); and Andrew Howell, 'Reading the Harley Lyrics: A Master Poet and the Language of Conventions', *ELH*, 47 (1980), 619–45. For *The Thrush and the Nightingale*, see *English Lyrics of the XIIIth Century*, ed. by Carleton Brown (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1932), pp. 101–07.

¹⁴ Joseph Dane, 'Page Layout and Textual Autonomy in Harley MS 2253 "Lenten Ys Come wiþ Love to Toune"', *Medium Ævum*, 68 (1999), 32–41 (p. 34).

¹⁵ Had the scribe wanted this reading, he had means by which to indicate it (i.e. by such bracketing as appears on fol. 105^r). He could have given a whole page to the two poems, thereby allowing the 'indeterminate' stanza to be copied at the bottom, bridging the columns.

¹⁶ Seth Lerer, 'Medieval English Literature and the Idea of the Anthology', *PMLA*, 118 (2003), 1251–67 (pp. 1255–59).

in tabulis' ('I have written this song on a tablet').¹⁷ In the layout, texts, and languages of this page, Lerer finds in microcosm the method of the whole manuscript, and especially the phenomena of selection and literary assembly, now self-consciously put on display. Part of this effect derives from the references to song within the visible fact of writing: 'The poetry of folio 76^r [...] creates, in effect, a fiction of performance: a set of texts that explore the activities of singing, poetic making, and inscription.'¹⁸ More than that, the themes of the lyrics project a vision of creation itself: 'Three languages, three landscapes; a trajectory from birth to death, from spring to Passion and Resurrection.' This effect lies in the scribe's capacity to choose what to use and where to place it; having been taken from earlier environments, the poems are 'picked as *flores* of medieval lyricality and assembled in this *florilegium*'.¹⁹ Lerer's broad argument is that the 'idea of the anthology controls much of the English medieval notion of the literary'.²⁰ Whether or not one agrees that a single page can support this claim, it is indeed clear that in order to have had the capacity to create literary effects by astute selection, the scribe must have had before him a good assortment of potentially apt material.

Compilation and National Languages and Dialects

We now understand that the main scribe of Harley must have been a trained cleric and a legal scribe sometimes commissioned to record Latin writs.²¹ He must have moved in social circles that spoke Anglo-Norman, that is, among the local gentry and manor lords of Ludlow and its vicinity. To judge by the Anglo-Norman translations from Latin that we believe to be his, his native language was English, yet he practised French as a literary language. Linguistic mobility was the norm among the upper classes and the educated. English monolingualism marked one as uneducated and illiterate, although most persons who spoke and worked

¹⁷ Editor G. L. Brook emends the manuscript reading *Scriptit* to *Scripti* (*The Harley Lyrics: The Middle English Lyrics of Ms. Harley 2253*, 4th edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968; repr. 1978), p. 55). Lerer's discussion depends in part on this emendation, but he does not note it.

¹⁸ Lerer, 'Medieval English Literature', p. 1258.

¹⁹ Lerer, 'Medieval English Literature', p. 1259.

²⁰ Lerer, 'Medieval English Literature', p. 1253.

²¹ Carter Revard, 'Scribe and Provenance', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 21–109.

entirely in English — that is, tradesmen, labourers, farmers, and peasants — would also have known some practical French and Latin terms. Nevertheless, as Nicholas Watson notes, ‘the weighty presence of these two prestigious languages militated against the social or intellectual advancement of those whose only language was English’.²²

Harley is a predominantly French book even without counting the first forty-eight folios of French religious verse written in an earlier textura hand. And yet the English and the Latin texts, generously intermingled with the French ones, contribute to its compilational coherence. English texts are presented without distinction alongside texts in French and Latin. In John Scahill’s assessment, the book possesses ‘some sense of linguistic decorum, [...] but it suggests no secondary status for English’.²³ There are, however, detectible shifts of social register among the languages in use. The trilingual macaronic poem *Dum ludis floribus* wittily encapsulates these registers. The English student-clerk dwells in Paris. In the language of his studies, Latin, he describes how he composes this song; in his adopted language, French, he tells of his lodging; but it is with a native English phrase that he sighs a final self-pitying love-lament: ‘may Y sugge namore, [...] 3ef hi de3e for loue of hire, duel hit ys’.²⁴ In the Harley scribe’s portion of the book,

²² Nicholas Watson, ‘The Politics of Middle English Writing’, in *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory, 1280–1520*, ed. by Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Nicholas Watson, Andrew Taylor, and Ruth Evans (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), pp. 331–52 (p. 332). A sociolinguistic approach to the trilingual texts in Harley 2253 is much needed. Some useful background studies of Middle English in contact with other languages include Jeremy J. Smith, ‘The Use of English: Language Contact, Dialect Variation, and Written Standardisation During the Middle English Period’, in *English in its Social Contexts: Essays in Historical Sociolinguistics*, ed. by Tim William Machan and Charles T. Scott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 47–68; Thomas Hahn, ‘Early Middle English’, in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. by David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 61–91; the essays in *Multilingualism in Later Medieval Britain*, ed. by D. A. Trotter (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000); the essays in *Placing Middle English in Context*, ed. by Irma Taavitsainen, Terttu Nevalainen, Päivi Pahta, and Matti Rissanen (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2000); and Tim William Machan, *English in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

²³ Scahill, ‘Trilingualism’, p. 27; and Elizabeth Salter, *Fourteenth-Century English Poetry: Contexts and Readings* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983; repr. 1984), p. 24. According to Turville-Petre, the three languages are ‘perceived as different in function and character. [...] the English [...] is entirely verse; most of the Latin is prose, while the French is about equally verse and prose’ (*England the Nation*, p. 198).

²⁴ Citations of texts from Harley 2253 are taken from the facsimile, with modern punctuation and capitalization added, unless otherwise noted.

folios 49–140, one finds all the English verse texts embedded in a frame consisting of French and Latin.²⁵ The scribe begins with an ABC poem in French — a visual and self-consciously literate opening — followed by a French debate between winter and summer. Next are two Latin prose items (a saint's life and a prayer), and thereafter one finds an intermingling of French and English verse texts, until the manuscript turns to French and Latin didactic material mostly in prose (fols 128–40). At the very end, there is a cluster on death and royal power (nos 113–16), the last item being another Latin saint's life. As Thorlac Turville-Petre notes, 'The scribe of Harley 2253 placed most of the Latin at the very beginning and end, but wove the vernacular languages in and out of one another'.²⁶

We have long recognized that the Middle English lyrics in Harley 2253 have diverse dialectal origins, but what this extraordinary fact might tell us of the compiler has not been examined. Typically, scholars use it to argue for the dispersal of alliterative verse at an early date, or to comment on the rarity of popular vernacular poems elsewhere in the surviving record.²⁷ But we should also remember that the data point to something unusual happening in one place, Ludlow, that is, to the scribal activity of an idiosyncratic compiler who avidly collected what he came across in the way of English verse, and who possessed a healthy appetite for French and Latin literature as well. Whether he did it by travelling about or whether the manuscripts and single sheets were transported to the West Midlands seems impossible to determine. It was probably some combination of both, for what we can see is that the Harley scribe was a connoisseur of texts, and while he inscribed

²⁵ See also Scahill, 'Trilingualism', pp. 27–28. My discussion excludes from consideration the Anglo-Norman religious material of fols 1–48 (Quires 1–4), to which the Harley scribe appends his work, and also the other manuscripts that contain the scribe's hand (BL, MSS Royal 12. C. XII and Harley 273). On Quires 1–4, see John J. Thompson, "'Frankis rimes here I redd, / Communlik in ilk[a] sted . . .': The French Bible Stories in Harley 2253", in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 271–87 (pp. 273–79); Ker, *Facsimile*, pp. ix–x; and Carter Revard's essay in this volume. On the other books of the Harley scribe, see Revard, 'Scribe and Provenance', pp. 65–73, 81–86.

²⁶ Turville-Petre, *England the Nation*, p. 199.

²⁷ See, for example, Ralph Hanna, 'Alliterative Poetry', in *Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. by Wallace, pp. 488–512 (p. 509); and Derek Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), pp. 120, 125. On the dialects of the Harley lyrics, see G. L. Brook, 'The Original Dialects of the Harley Lyrics', *Leeds Studies in English*, 2 (1933), 38–61; McSparran, 'Language of the English Poems', pp. 391–426; and Fein, 'Lyrics of MS Harley 2253'.

several well-promulgated items, like the *Debate between the Body and the Soul*, he had a special affinity for regional texts that were the ephemera of his day.²⁸

In this regard, the geographical range of Harley 2253 is worth a brief survey. Scattergood finely summarizes what attitudes the book's political poems hold when taken as expressive of a whole view of nation:

The manuscript [...] sets forth a generally nationalist set of ideas, a sense of England the nation, and the poems are generally favorable to the king, but not uncritically so. They are, however, suspicious of the king's power and prerogatives, of his officials, and of the fairness of the exactions and taxes levied upon the people. They are also resistant to the encroachments of centrality. [...] There is evidence of a regionalism that cuts across the broader nationalist attitudes of the poems. Attempts to centralize and organize England are frequently greeted with deep-seated skepticism and a resistance that is traditional and local in its ethos — though nobody who set forth these sentiments would have thought of himself as anything other than a loyal Englishman, and certainly not as a traitor or as a rebel.²⁹

The political poems, estate-based satires, monologues, and narratives in three languages all corroborate this view. Corrie delineates a recurrent interest in kingship in the book, but the general attitude, while respectful, is not blindly royalist, nor is it exclusively English. There are a listing of the arms of numerous European kings (no. 96), a prayer to the Three Kings (i.e. Magi, no. 108a), a paternal lesson from King Louis of France (no. 94), and a regal portrait of Christ (no. 91). In *Le Jongleur d'Ely et le Roi d'Angleterre* (no. 75), a minstrel cracks witty puns to expose a French-speaking English king's foolish pretensions.³⁰ Yet stirring patriotic sentiments burst out in such poems as *The Death of Edward I* and *The Song of Lewes*, sentiments that Reed would apparently attribute to the compiler himself, along with his feel for nature, the charm of youth, and romance. It is important, however, that we distinguish the attitudes of the verse from those of the compiler, for whom the salient feature is the catholicity of the collection.

²⁸ A level of internationalism is also represented in Harley 2253; see, for example, Elizabeth Salter, *English and International: Studies in the Literature, Art and Patronage of Medieval England*, ed. by Derek Pearsall and Nicolette Zeeman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 83; Salter, *Fourteenth-Century English Poetry*, p. 123; Corrie, 'Kings and Kingship', pp. 77–79; Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, pp. 127–29; and numerous texts in Harley, such as Ker, *Facsimile*, nos 38, 39, 94, 96, and 97.

²⁹ Scattergood, 'Authority and Resistance', pp. 168–69.

³⁰ Useful discussions of this interesting text appear in Reichl, 'Debate Verse', pp. 231–33; Nolan, 'Anthologizing Ribaldry', pp. 292–307; and Corrie, 'Kings and Kingship', pp. 72–76.

When Turville-Petre sifted through contemporary arguments, c. 1290–1340, that advocated for English as the language of England, he noted a special breed of linguistic nationalism in Harley 2253: the distinctiveness of this Ludlow-based ‘planned volume’ rests in its ‘country-wide selection of the best poems in English’.³¹ The geographical range of the collection is indeed startling, but the question is what, if anything, does such collecting and selecting indicate of nationalist attitudes? When put in the context of the compilational selections in three languages, maybe little more than that there was a compiler alert to his surroundings and to the diverse textual, cross-lingual, multidialectal cultures he encountered, in or out of Ludlow. The West Midlands was rich in vernacular literary manuscripts, as the studies in this volume testify, but for the range of texts found in Harley we still have little sense of how the compiler came across them — and perhaps actively altered them — even where we have more than one copy.

For example, could the two Simon de Montfort poems (nos 23–24; c. 1265) have been preserved together in an older book because there were contemporary Franciscan sentiments strongly favouring the baron’s cause, sentiments that would also have been prone to preserve the contemporary writings of John of Wales (no. 109; c. 1265) and the pious King Louis of France (no. 94; c. 1270), both of whom associated sympathetically with de Montfort?³² This question has

³¹ Turville-Petre, *England the Nation*, p. 195. For a cautionary response, see Derek Pearsall, ‘The Idea of Englishness in the Fifteenth Century’, in *Nation, Court and Culture: New Essays on Fifteenth-Century English Poetry*, ed. by Helen Cooney (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), pp. 15–27; Pearsall argues against the ‘recurrent desire to visit a developed sense of nationhood on early England’ (p. 16) and notes that writers arguing for English as the language of England in the period 1290–1340 represent ‘only fragmentary, sporadic, regional responses to particular circumstances’ (p. 17). For Turville-Petre’s response to Pearsall, see his ‘Afterword: The Brutus Prologue to *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*’, in *Imagining a Medieval English Nation*, ed. by Kathy Lavezzo (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), pp. 340–46. In earlier work, Pearsall had noted that some poems in Harley display ‘the beginnings of nationalist propaganda’ (*Old English and Middle English Poetry*, p. 122).

³² See J. R. Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; repr. 1997), pp. 253, 369; *Anglo-Norman Political Songs*, ed. by Isabel S. T. Aspin, ANTS, 11 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1953), pp. 24–35 (p. 26); and Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, p. 122. On the de Montfort poems in Harley 2253, see Scattergood, ‘Authority and Resistance’, pp. 178–85; Revard, ‘Scribe and Provenance’, p. 28; and David L. Jeffrey, ‘Authors, Anthologists, and Franciscan Spirituality’, in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 261–70 (p. 263). On *The Song of Lewes* in the thirteenth-century BL, MS Harley 978, see Andrew Taylor, *Textual Situations: Three Medieval Manuscripts and their Readers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), pp. 84–85, 121–26.

its own interest as regards our forming hypotheses about the scribe's exemplars. But in this instance the compilational question adds yet more complexity, for by what inspiration does the Harley scribe add his own touch to these political poems of triumph and defeat (laid out in precisely ditypch form on fols 58^v and 59^r) by inserting a sombre, penitential, trilingual epitaph at the end of the second poem?³³ In fact, the 'epitaph' may well point either way, since the next poem (copied below it on fol. 59^v) is *The Execution of Sir Simon Fraser*, a bloodthirsty account of the public executions of traitors William Wallace and Fraser. Earth unto earth with a vengeance. The act of compilation builds meaning without making an authoritative comment: Simon de Montfort is celebrated and remembered; but he was mortal as are we all, dust to dust; and so, traitors must die. Each of the political texts opens as a minstrel song ('Sitteþ alle stille ant herkneþ to me', 'Chaunter mestoit', 'Lystneþ lordynges a newe song Ichulle bigynne'), and this feature becomes part of the unified sequencing of texts. They constitute a performance, a progressive entertainment, perhaps mainly to be imagined in the mind, and at the same time the visuals of the page reinforce connections between texts, with a meditative site like the epitaph glancing both backward and forward, separate from, yet connected to, the texts above and below it on folio 59^v.³⁴ Linguistic diversity plays a role here, as the epitaph speaks to everyone in three languages, while the longer political poems — written in French and English — become independent exempla to which the epitaph applies.

Compilation and the Rhetoric of Layout

To construct an outline of the scribe's principles of compilation, I examine here a long sequence of texts in a portion of Harley 2253 not treated continuously in the scholarship, that is, the texts of Quires 8–11 (fols 70–105). The last full item in Quire 7 depicts a blasphemous pilgrimage in the proselytizing sexual missionary work of Gilote and Johane, and then the final text that bridges Quires 7 and 8, *Les*

³³ The epitaph consists of eight French lines, two Latin lines translating the preceding two French lines, and the English *Earth upon Earth* (Ker, *Facsimile*, nos 24a, 24b; fol. 59^v).

³⁴ The effect might be compared to Robert Thornton's copying of a moral meditation on death — the popular song *A Sinner's Lament* — between the prose *Life of Alexander* and the alliterative *Morte Arthure* in Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS 91, fols 51^v–52^r; see *Moral Love Songs and Laments*, ed. by Susanna Greer Fein (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1998), pp. 367–68. Thornton, however, seems to have added this detail as an afterthought once the long romances had been copied.

Pelrinages communes que crestiens fount en la seinte terre, converts the focus to spiritually proper travel sites. Though in verse, *Gilote et Johane* is inscribed in double columns that are identical to the columnar format given to the prose *Les Pelrinages* and its companion *Les Pardouns de Acres*. A textual threesome is copied, then, across the end of Quire 7 and the beginning of Quire 8, visually unifying folios 67^v–70^r while the topic of women's territorial secrets (a major focus in Quire 7) undergoes a reversal. Quire 8 opens as the tour through Holy Land sites ends, and the book turns to an account of indulgences available to pilgrims by means of the saints.³⁵ *Pardouns* concludes on folio 70^v, in three lines at the top of the page, the columnar layout abandoned.

Beneath the final lines of the pardons are two poems — *Satire on the Consistory Courts* and *The Labourers in the Vineyard* — copied in diptych fashion by vertical columns. The compiler here instructs by an implicit rhetoric of layout that modern readers have neglected to read.³⁶ Juxtaposed with *Pardouns*, the poems share a common subject, that is, the dispensation of justice. In *Satire* an illiterate English narrator complains about what those who are lettered are able to inflict upon him. Facing the authority of a diocesan court, he is frustrated that laws written in books, and his own name written in court ledger, can be used against him.³⁷ The scribe copied this lively poem in longish lines across three pages (fols 70^v–71^r), leaving the right side of each page blank. Beside it in the same book-opening (70^v–71^r), he copied the twelve-line stanzaic *Labourers*. Here a biblical parable portrays how unfair seeming is God's judgement, with an emphasis placed upon how the parable itself is written in a book by the literate Matthew. The key verbal-thematic linkages occur in the first and last stanzas: concerns with literacy and the authority vested in books, grumbling and its risks, and consideration of what is fair or unfair. The pairing of themes is very dramatic, with the layout *performing* a specific meaning. Is this intercolumnar, open-page event planned for a reader's eye (with a self-referencing of books), or is it meant for an instructive enactment of voices before an audience? It is difficult to tell.

Finishing *Satire* in nine lines at the top of folio 71^v, the scribe creates a new diptych page when he copies *Spring* and *Advice to Women* (with *Advice's* last stanza on fol. 72^r, as discussed above). These lyrics are singable to the same tune,

³⁵ Fein, 'A Saint', pp. 366–67; Revard, 'The Wife of Bath's Grandmother', p. 122.

³⁶ Noted briefly by Revard, 'The Wife of Bath's Grandmother', p. 122.

³⁷ John Scattergood, 'The "Lewed" and the "Lerede": A Reading of *Satire on the Consistory Courts*', in *The Lost Tradition: Essays on Middle English Alliterative Poetry* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 27–42 (pp. 38–39).

and interestingly, they are bracketed by other twelve-line stanzaic poems in Harley 2253: *Labourers* (which has an isometric stanza) and *An Old Man's Prayer*, the lyric lament copied on the opposite page (fol. 72^r). *Prayer* possesses a complicated seventeen-line stanza that most editors print as alternating strophes of twelve and five lines. For Theo Stemmler, the 'matched' metre of all four poems creates a set; although the metrical similarities are not exact, it seems plausible that the scribe sequenced these poems in part for the twelve-line strophe, and in part for the diptych potentialities. Revard notes a contrastive effect in having the old man voice his disillusioned lament after the idealism of youth.³⁸ The layout highlights this thematic turn — youth on verso, age on recto. And what we cannot easily grasp by silent reading is the probable aural aspect (song), which also seems enacted by means of metre and first-person lyricism.

An Old Man's Prayer ends on folio 72^{va}, middle of column, the speaker approaching his grave and praying for a heavenly vision ('Nou Icham to deþe ydyht, | Ydon is al my dede. | God vs lene of ys lyht | Ðat we of sontes habben syht | Ant heuene to mede! Amen'). Immediately after this prayer the compiler inscribes the lyric with the lovely refrain 'Blow, northerne wynd, | Sent þou me my suetyng! | Blow, norþerne wynd, | Blou! blou! blou!' (fols 72^v–73^r). Copied at the head of the lyric, the refrain plays evocatively backwards and forwards (as did the epitaph between the de Montfort and Fraser poems), and the new lyric echoes the old man's word *syht*: 'Ichot a burde in boure bryht | Ðat sully semly is on syht.' From looking upon the saints to glimpsing one's lady, both poems close on a note of grief, the old man having addressed 'Dredful Deþ' and the new lover singing: 'For hire loue mournyng Y make | More þen eny mon.' While laid out as a sequence rather than as a visual diptych, these two long lyrics possess a linked logic that reverberates in their juxtaposed ending and opening (with refrain), in their similar depictions of agony by means of allegories of court life, and in the haunted echoes of their mournful ends.³⁹

³⁸ Theo Stemmler, 'Miscellany or Anthology? The Structure of Medieval Manuscripts: MS Harley 2253, for Example', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 111–21 (p. 117); and Revard, 'The Wife of Bath's Grandmother', pp. 122–23. Another Harley lyric in a twelve-line stanza is *The Fair Maid of Ribblesdale* (Ker, *Facsimile*, no. 34).

³⁹ For the personification allegories in each lyric, see *Harley Lyrics*, ed. by Brook, p. 47 (*An Old Man's Prayer*, lines 52–63) and p. 50 (*Blow, Northerne Wynd*, lines 55–70); see also Revard, 'The Wife of Bath's Grandmother', pp. 123–24; and John Scattergood, 'An Old Man's Prayer and Bastard Feudalism', in *The Lost Tradition*, pp. 15–26.

As these lyrics close upon images of dying, they prepare, in turn, for the third poem on these adjoined pages (fols 72^v–73^r), *The Death of Edward I*. Tones of mourning liken the three poems found here, and yet the scribe has paired *Death* more specifically with the political one that follows, *The Flemish Insurrection* (fols 73^v–74^v). Had *Blow, Northerne Wynd* ended on folio 72^v, the Harley scribe-compiler might have fit all of *Death* on folio 73^r. But *Death* instead flows onto folio 73^v, allowing *Insurrection* to begin at about the same place down the page as did *Death* on folio 73^r. Both open in minstrel style: for *Death*, ‘Alle þat beop of huerte trewe, | A stounde herkneþ to my song’; for *Insurrection*, ‘Lustneþ, lordinges, boþe 3onge ant olde’. These exhortations link them and highlight their orality, which would seem to go with their histories of making and performance, regardless of whether or not such performance is meant to operate here. Moreover, as everywhere in Harley 2253, declamatory cries create manuscript sites that are visual and also imaginatively aural. Politically, these poems are pro-English and anti-French, and each ends by anticipating Edward II.⁴⁰ Beyond this, *Insurrection* ends with a dire warning to the French king:

3e[f] þe Prince of Walis his lyf habbe mote,
 Hit falleþ þe Kyng of Fraunce bittrore þen þe sote [*soot*],
 Bote he þe raþere [*sooner*] þer-of welle do bote [*amends*],
 Wel sore hit shal hym rewe.⁴¹

The page opposite to the last stanzas of *The Flemish Insurrection* starts a new section of religious lyrics, which would seem not to be associated with the political poems just concluded. However, when attuned to the subject of kingship worked in different keys throughout Harley 2253, one easily perceives that the opposed pages (fols 74^v–75^r) are a contrastive diptych of political and divine kingship. The first item immediately opposite *Insurrection* is a French lyric in praise of the Virgin, addressing Mary as mother of the all-powerful King: ‘Marie pur toun enfaunt | Qe est roi tot puissant | E tot le mounde guye.’ The second lyric, also opposite to *Insurrection*, addresses ‘Sute Jhesu king of blysse’. The first line of each poem emphatically draws attention to an argument created by the layout: on one side, the partisan strife of earthly kings, and on the other, praise of the heavenly King. In addition, the last line and French rhyme-word of *Les Joies de*

⁴⁰ On nationalistic sentiments in these poems, see Scattergood, ‘Authority and Resistance’, pp. 169–74.

⁴¹ *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, ed. by Rossell Hope Robbins (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), pp. 9–13 (p. 13; lines 133–36).

Notre-Dame ('E ma alme en ciel myse') seem to echo the English rhymes found in the first stanza of *Suete Ihesu* (*blysse/lisse/ywisse/misse*), while each lyric shares here the idea of reaching heavenly salvation.

With *Les Joies de Notre-Dame* the scribe enacts a transition from political song to religious lyric, commencing a mood of devotional piety that will guide the scribe's selection of most of the next eighteen poems (nos 50–67; fols 75^r–81^v).⁴² *Les Joies* and *Suete Ihesu* belong specifically to a group of four poems copied on folio 75^{r-v}, each one linked to the next at their points of ending and beginning. *Suete Ihesu* closes on the idea of heaven — 'Suete Ihesu, [. . .] sebbe to heouene þou vs led' — and *Iesu Crist, Heouene Kyng* opens in repetition of the words *Iesu* and *heouene*. In the first stanza of the fourth poem, *A Winter Song*, the speaker laments worldly care and repeats specific words found in the last stanza of the preceding lyric:

Wel Ichot ant soþ hit ys
 Þat in þis world nys no blys,
 Bote care, serewe, ant pyne;
 Þarefore Ich rede we wurchen so
 Þat we mowe come to
 Þe ioie wiþoute fyne. (*Iesu Crist, Heouene Kyng*, lines 22–27)

Wynter wakeneth al my care,
 Nou þis leues waxeth bare;
 Ofte Y sike ant mourne sare
 When hit cometh in my þoht
 Of þis worldes ioie hou hit geþ al to noht. (*A Winter Song*, lines 1–5)

An emotional reflection upon mutability and mortality, *A Winter Song* well complements the poem that comes next, *A Spring Song of the Passion*, in which the speaker suffers pains of love-longing quickened by springtime and bringing into remembrance Christ on the cross. By an act of compilation, the scribe answers the melancholy sense of loss found in the first seasonal song, which ends 'For Y not whider Y shal ne hou longe her duelle', with the sweet, sad hopefulness of the next, opening

When Y se blosmes springe
 Ant here foules song,
 A suete loue-longynge
 Myn herte þourhout stong.

⁴² Dane considers this section to be organized upon lyrics of the Passion ('Page Layout', p. 34); see also Carter Revard, 'Gilote et Johane: An Interlude in BL MS Harley 2253', *Studies in Philology*, 79 (1982), 122–46 (pp. 133–38).

With *A Spring Song* the reader has now reached the representational *tabula* of folio 76^r, the splendid trilingual page of three lyrics written as prose, where below this Passion lyric appear *Ferroy chaunson* and *Dum ludis floribus*, the page that Lerer reads as a microcosm of the whole manuscript and its principles of assembly: ‘Three languages, three landscapes; a trajectory from birth to death, from spring to Passion and Resurrection.’ Lerer appears to be extrapolating from this page to the whole book, and yet to judge by the lyrics themselves, the expansive statement he makes does not so readily apply to this page. *A Spring Song* contemplates Passion and resurrection, but the others do not. *Ferroy chaunson* is a secular song sung by an unrequited lover, whose refrain prays to Saint Thomas to pardon his mistress’s hard-heartedness so that she will grant mercy to his true passion. *Dum ludis floribus* is a lovely, macaronic ode to his mistress by a passionate English schoolboy in Paris: ‘When I see her, I am in such ecstasy that I am like the moon among stars. May God grant me mercy to kiss and do what comes next. [...] If I die for love of her, it will be a pity.’⁴³ The page, top to bottom, represents a modulation of theme, from love-longing for the divine — that is, Christ on the cross — with its promise of resurrection, to love-longing for a woman, where death is the state of the unpitied lover.

When one turns the leaf, a new poem redirects the anthology back to devotional piety in remembrance of the Crucifixion. *Quant fu en ma iuvente* is copied complete upon the next opening, folios 76^v–77^r. In *chanson d’aventure* mode, a youthful, waywardly foolish narrator, singing ‘weylowoi!’, hears a comforting, instructive song in praise of the Virgin and in amorous worship of Christ’s wound and precious blood. The poem ends in praise of Mary and, when one again turns the leaf, the subject continues in *Marie mere al salueour*, the Marian lyric that fills folio 77^{va}. The scribe has thus resumed the sequence of religious lyrics begun earlier (on fol. 75^r). The next four columns of verse contain the forty-eight stanzas of *Dulcis Ihesu memoria*, where each stanza addresses ‘Ihesu’ in remembrance and love-longing. The transition from French Marian lyric to English devotion on Jesus’s name is fluent and flawless:

Dame, moi donez vostre enfaunt
 Qe de vus si fust l’estaunt;
 Par vostre doucour fetez taunt,
 Autre chose ne vous demaunt. (*Marie mere al salueour*, lines 49–52)

⁴³ ‘Quant ie la vey ie su in tali gloria | Come est la lune celi inter sidera; | Dieu la moi doint sua misericordia | Beyser e fere que secuntur alis’ (*Harley Lyrics*, ed. by Brook, p. 55).

Iesu suete is the loue of þe,
 Noþing so suete may be;
 Al þat may wiþ eʒen se
 Haueþ no suetnesse aʒeynes þe. (*Dulcis Ihesu memoria*, lines 1–4)⁴⁴

The layout of folios 77^v–78^v displays the compiler's forethought: the column containing *Marie mere al salueour* squeezes in fifty-three lines so that the poem does not flow into the next column, which is reserved for *Dulcis Iesu memoria*, a poem copied in columns of fifty-one, forty-eight, forty-eight, and forty-eight lines, respectively.⁴⁵

Meditation upon the Crucifixion becomes the unifying force of the poems and lyrics on the next two openings (fols 78^v–80^r). A French verse sermon, *Vne Petite Parole seigneurs escotez*, follows *Dulcis Iesu memoria*. Presented as an oral performance for lords, it provides many prompts for imaging Christ on the cross, and when it ends, there is room to begin the English *Stond Wel, Moder, vnder Rode* at the base of folio 79^{rb}. This poem flows into the next opening, folios 79^v–80^r, where three more Passion lyrics in English are copied complete. When *Stond Wel* ends, *Iesu, for Bi Muchele Miht* fills the remainder of folio 79^v (copied deeply into the lower margin to fit). On the opposite page, *I Syke When Y Singe* occupies column a, and *An Autumn Song* occupies column b. This opening is every bit as remarkable as the *Dum ludis floribus* page when one recognizes that the poetry gathered here in a West Midlands manuscript hails from throughout England — to judge by dialect evidence, from the east Midlands, from the south (with Midlands features), from the north, and from the north-east Midlands.⁴⁶ Clearly, the Harley

⁴⁴ Compare this lyric to the earlier one on Jesus's name (Ker, *Facsimile*, no. 50); see Fein, 'Lyrics of MS Harley 2253', pp. 4189–90, 4339–41.

⁴⁵ It looks very much as if the scribe initially copied *Dulcis Iesu memoria* in four columns of forty-eight lines each (i.e. forty-eight four-line stanzas), leaving room for another poem to be copied on fol. 77^v. If so, it is interesting that he did not avail himself of the opportunity to copy this poem on a single page-opening, but instead chose to run it onto fol. 78^v. (Fol. 78 is, moreover, the first leaf of a new quire.) When he later inserted *Marie mere al salueour*, it had to be squeezed onto fifty-three lines, beside the forty-eight-line column of the other poem. To create a balanced look to the page, the scribe topped column b with the title and inserted two unmetrical lines at the base of that column: 'Þy bac of þornes þy nayles þre | Þe sharpe spere þat þourh-stong þe.'

⁴⁶ On the dialects, see Fein, 'Lyrics of MS Harley 2253', pp. 4193–95, 4346–49. Was the Harley scribe conscious of this dialectal diversity, as he, in effect, superimposes the quadrant points of England with the Cross (north, east, south, west) by mixing geographical origins upon one vernacular page-opening? Perhaps this idea is too far-fetched. More work needs to be done on the Harley scribe and his representation of dialects in English and French. For a valuable model, see McSparran, 'Language of the English Poems', pp. 392–401.

scribe had, in part, a religious motive behind his collecting activity. He here creates a vernacular site in contemplation of Christ, Mary, and the cross. Modern readers of the Harley lyrics need to recognize how these four items are specifically clustered in one place, and how the compiler has positioned them as a group to be read (or recited) together.

Three more Harley lyrics form the next cluster, appearing at the page-opening of folios 80^v–81^r: *De Clerico et Puella*, *When the Nyhtegale Singes*, and *Blessed Be Pou, Leuedy*. These poems form a metrical group composed in four-line stanzas rhyming aaaa⁷, and the scribe has in fact marked them as such, drawing a horizontal line after the third one where it ends on folio 81^v.⁴⁷ It is possible that a single tune once accompanied these lyrics, and as with the *Litel Wot Hit Any Mon* poems, there is a secular lyric to match a religious one in the same number of stanzas (*De Clerico* and *Blessed Be Pou*, each with nine; *Nyhtegale* has five). Interestingly, the Harley scribe again manages to link the first member of this group with the last member of the preceding one; as others have noticed, topical and verbal links seem to connect *An Autumn Song* to *De Clerico* (the brightness of a lady, the wilting of a petal or leaf).⁴⁸ As with the *Dum ludis floribus* page, all three poems of this group express love-longing, though now in a turn that goes from secular to religious. The first offers a lively, dialogic variant of the pastourelle; the second is a delicate *reverdie*; and the third addresses the Virgin. One more poem culminates the set, and it also marks the end of a large section of Harley 2253 devoted almost entirely to religious songs. This lyric is *The Five Joys of the Virgin*, which Rosemary Woolf calls ‘the purest example in English of a love song to the Virgin’ (fol. 81^v).⁴⁹ Echoing a secular pastourelle (‘Ase Y me rod þis ender day | By grene wode to seche play’), the poet gilds a petition to Christ with an erotic subtext, asking Him to grant Mary’s intimate mediation on his behalf.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ While the Harley version of *Blessed Be Pou, Leuedy* tends to reduce the septenary metre to six stresses, an older version found in BL, MS Egerton 613 retains stanzas of aaaa⁷. The Egerton poem appears in *English Lyrics of the XIIIth Century*, ed. by Brown, pp. 111–13; see also Fein, ‘Lyrics of MS Harley 2253’, p. 4199.

⁴⁸ Fein, ‘Lyrics of MS Harley 2253’, pp. 4196–97; Stemmler, ‘Miscellany or Anthology?’, pp. 117–18; Revard, ‘*Gilote et Johane*’, pp. 136–38.

⁴⁹ Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 137.

⁵⁰ The secular pastourelle begins ‘Nou sprinkes the sprai’ (*English Lyrics of the XIIIth Century*, ed. by Brown, pp. 119–20).

Maximian, a second old man's lament, opens a new section of Harley 2253 on folio 82^r, as we near the end of Quire 9, and this piece does not seem to connect in any particular way to what has just come before it. This juncture appears to mark an authentic break where the Harley scribe has concluded one sequence and now begins another, with an evident plan to continue into the next quire, for *Maximian* seems to connect with and prepare for *King Horn* (fols 82^r–92^v). It is copied in a triple-column format, filling folio 82^{r-v} and carrying over a few lines to folio 83^r, the first page of *Horn*. The first line of *Maximian*, copied in the scribe's usual manner with an enlarged initial and paraph, announces its secular subject in oral style: 'Herkneþ to my ron, | As Ich ou telle con.' *King Horn* is soon to begin in a similar way:

Alle heo ben blyþe
 Ðat to my song ylyþe;
 A song Ychulle ou singe
 Of Allof þe gode kynge.

Maximian is of a man brought low, from kingly strength ('purpre ant pal he droh') to weakness in old age; *Horn* depicts good king Allof overthrown by pagans before it becomes the romance of a young man growing from weakness to strength, earning his royal birthright.

Between these two items of minstrel performance, the Harley scribe inserts a French-English lyric prayer to Mary, and this insertion has a calculated purpose. The lyric operates, strikingly, as both the prayer epilogue to *Maximian* and the invocation that sets the mood for *Horn*. *Maximian*'s final moan looks towards his death:

Deþ is þat Y munne;
 Me seggeþ þat hit is sunne;
 God brynge vs out of þo.
 Amen, par charite,
 Ant so mote hit be.

Then come the petitions of *A Prayer for Deliverance*:

Mayden moder milde,
 Oiez cel oreysoun;
 From shome þou me shilde
 E de ly mal feloun
 For loue of þine childe
 Me menez de tresoun.

But, even as *Prayer* concludes *Maximian*, it also introduces *Horn*. Its final English rhyme-words (*kynge/synge*) anticipate the thematic rhyme that sets the scene of

romance: ‘A song Ychulle ou *singe* | Of Allof þe gode *kyng*e.’⁵¹ Evidently, the whole purpose of *Prayer* in the manuscript is to act as bridge between two performance pieces: a bitter monologue on age and an English romance. In the manuscript it looks both ways, bearing a function similar to that of the trilingual epitaph for the de Montfort poems and the refrain sounded when *An Old Man’s Prayer* ends. The compiler lays out all the parts on folio 83^r, apparently for the reading eye. Yet one can also imagine this sequence performed, with *Prayer* providing a worshipful, reflective pause between the two long secular works. Scholars of Middle English romance ought to take note of how we misunderstand the textual situatedness of this version of *King Horn* if we fail to read it with its prefacing prayer.

The scribe’s share of Harley 2253 comprises ninety-three leaves in total. At the heart of this redactive work appears the long text that follows *King Horn*, the French prose Bible stories (fols 92^v–105^r; leaves forty-four to fifty-seven of the Harley scribe’s portion). Scholarly opinion now holds that the scribe himself translated the Bible stories, as well as the outlaw romance *Fouke le Fitz Warin* found in BL, MS Royal 12. C. XII, and both are rendered in the Anglo-Norman dialect of an anglophone.⁵² The rendering of stories from Genesis, Exodus, and Numbers must have held some specific importance for the scribe, but what that was is difficult to establish. John J. Thompson finds that some selections and scribal notae correspond to stories used by others to support the cause of the clergy against royal taxation, as occurred under Kings Edward I and II. In terms of the compilational act, the Bible stories begin, as do so many Harley items, with an exhortation to listen — ‘Seigneurs, vus oy auez molt souent diuerses estoyres de la bible’ — and also with an assertion that the writer is actually speaking: ‘de queuex ore leysyr me est de parler’. Despite the length of the piece, paraps do punctuate its sections, and one might imagine that it was composed, and copied into Harley 2253, as an instructional work to be read aloud. Though we know nothing about the actual application of Harley texts, we find here once again that the scribe-compiler (and author of the translation) includes an element of performance.

The continuous block of planned, interrelated texts that I have just described occupies Quires 8–11. After *King Horn* the scribe fills all of Quire 10 and adds

⁵¹ Stemmler, ‘Miscellany or Anthology?’, pp. 119–20.

⁵² Thompson, “Frankis rimes here I redd”, pp. 280–87; Kuczynski, ‘An “Electric Stream”’, p. 128.

Quire 11 to accommodate the biblical text. One page remained (fol. 105^v), and on it he lists the books of the Bible, using the space instructionally. The compiler's tendency to connect texts by beginnings and endings and to attend to open-page layout shows even where two blocks come together. The lyric prayer *God, þat Al þis Myhtes May* on folio 106^r expresses the speaker's guilt, penance, and abjection. Following it are the first lines of *Sayings of St Bernard*, which cite Holy Writ for the thought that man is both worm and worms' food. Holy Writ's books are listed, of course, on the opposite leaf. *Sayings*, too, opens as an instructional event for auditors:

Lustneþ alle a lutel þrowe,
 3e þat wolleþ ouselue yknowe,
 Vnwys þah Y be.
 Ichulle telle ou, ase Y con,
 Hou Holy Wryt spekeþ of mon;
 Herkneþ nou to me.⁵³

Compilation and Performance

Textual scholars and sociolinguists looking at England in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries find themselves sifting through an array of influences and fluctuating conditions regarding the exchange of verbal knowledge — whether it be by oral or literate means — within a hierarchical yet increasingly mobile trilingual society, where the language spoken or written may denote not just class and rank, but also conditions of labour and formal education. What manuscript specialists may contribute to the picture are newly refocused investigations of how trilingual books leave material traces of the social forces at play in those times. As archival archaeologists and anthropologists, we can advance how we assess the ways texts were put into practice; that is, we can be alert to each codicological indicator of how they came to be copied, for what purpose, for what audience, looking at signs of actual or intended use (public performance or private reading), the nature of adjacent materials, the linguistic and social registers, and other internal, often literary clues that betray a text's social function in representing or imprinting notions about groups inside or outside an immediate audience.

In this regard, we should consider thoroughly the signs in Harley 2253 that this is a document created very much with oral performance as a highlighted

⁵³ On how these poems open Quire 12, see Nolan, 'Anthologizing Ribaldry', pp. 296–97.

purpose. While we cannot know precisely whether the compiler was planning sequences to be performed, recording sequences once performed, or simply performing on the page, we must acknowledge what is immediately apparent in even a surface perusal of the book. The scribe has intentionally made numerous texts *look* like they are being orally delivered.⁵⁴ The tops of pages bear words with tall ascenders crying to a particularly auditory breed of readers to ‘Alle herkneþ to me nou’, ‘Herkeþ hideward ant beoþ stille’, or ‘Herkne to my ron’ (fols 55^v, 64^v, 82^r), and numerous more hortatory openings appear at mid-page, where the scribe starts most items: ‘Lystneþ, lordynges, a newe song Ichulle bigynne’, ‘Alle þat beoþ of huerte trewe, [. . .] herkneþ to my song’, ‘Lustneþ, lordinges, boþe zonge ant olde’, ‘Vne petite parole seigneurs escotez’ (fols 59^v, 73^r, 73^v, 78^v).⁵⁵ Love poems, lyric prayers, complaints, and satires typically open in emotive first-person speech, setting up a tone for delivery, often with an indication of song: ‘Wiþ longyng Y am lad’, ‘Ich herde men vpo mold make muche mon’, ‘Weping haueþ myn wonges wet’, ‘When Y se blosmes springe’ (fols 63^v, 64^r, 66^r, 76^r). Moreover, two Harley texts are marked for speakers’ parts, and many others represent debates or

⁵⁴ Harley 2253 does not physically appear to have been in repetitive use before its modern discovery. It thus seems unlikely that the book served as a script for actual performances. It may be, however, that the scribe was planning for such a purpose but was hindered by an unforeseen cause, such as his or his patron’s death. Another possibility is that the book records the planning of texts and sequences actually performed, but is not itself the prompt-book for those performances. About the scribe’s circumstances, the theory often put forth is that he was a clerical retainer in charge of household entertainments, similar to the compiler of Bodleian, MS Digby 86, who was probably ‘a cleric, perhaps the local parish-priest, more probably a private chaplain in a manorial household. [. . .] He had a dual function, to provide both spiritual guidance and also what one might call book-based entertainment’: John Frankis, ‘The Social Context of Vernacular Writing in Thirteenth Century England: The Evidence of the Manuscripts’, in *Thirteenth Century England: Proceedings of the Newcastle upon Tyne Conference 1985*, ed. by P. R. Coss and S. D. Lloyd (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986), pp. 175–84 (p. 183). See Revard, ‘Scribe and Provenance’, pp. 22–23, 81, 86. On the problem of construing the texts as performances, see Hines, *Voices in the Past*, p. 104.

⁵⁵ The minstrel quality of openings in Harley 2253 has occasionally been noted but never, to my knowledge, examined as a continuous and conscious feature highlighted — maybe even imported — by the compiler. See, for example, Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, pp. 121, 122, 124; the interesting discussion by Revard, ‘The Wife of Bath’s Grandmother’, pp. 118–19; and the evidence collected by Constance Bullock-Davies, *Register of Royal and Domestic Minstrels 1272–1327* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986).

dialogues that would readily lend themselves to being played in different voices by one or more performers.⁵⁶

The scribal rhetoric of layout — a language used constantly by the compiler — might seem to contradict these many references to song and oral performance. One is for the eye; the other for the ear. And yet, somehow, the mediums are made to coexist. Harley 2253 shows us a world where literacy and orality are in flux and felt to be interdependent and interpenetrable.⁵⁷ By studying layout with content, one learns much about the compiler's method and plan for Harley 2253. He joined poems at their seams — their beginnings and their endings — and he planned pages in conjunction with their adjacent pages, considering both what was on a page's reverse side and what was opposite to it in the page-opening. He utilized the potential of the two-sided open page to denote meditative sites — for example, to think upon the Crucifixion, or to contemplate the worldly beside the spiritual, or to see youth beside age. He used, in addition, other diptych forms — for example, top-bottom and columnar formats — to show how specific items can be read together to glean instructive contrasts and likenesses. The practitioner of such a method does not pass judgement on individual topics or treatments so much as he takes pleasure in how a wide reading in literature and lore satisfies an appetite for intellectual variety, for ideas coherently shaped, for mental energies at play, and for, in the end, spiritual sustenance.

Meanwhile, the many reminders that we are 'listening' to texts operate outside of what is specifically 'aural' because they make a visual impression as well. These reminders appear in opening lines set off by spacing, paraps, and capitals exactly where a browser would rest the eye to glean titles and content. Textual and compilational evidence shows that the compiler deliberately sought this effect. The Harley compiler crafts the book by exploitation of beginnings and endings, and one need not doubt that he manipulated several to achieve a desired effect. A lyric prayer prefaces and anticipates a rhyme in *King Horn*; this link is produced by the compiler. Some fabliaux open or close with unique lines, faintly echoing Marie de France, Chrétien de Troyes, or Jean de Meun, and these too are probably invented

⁵⁶ The texts marked for speakers are *The Harrowing of Hell* (no. 21) and *Gilote and Johane* (no. 37). The other debates and dialogues are nos 9, 22, 35, 60, 64, and 75; see Reichl, 'Debate Verse'.

⁵⁷ See Janet Coleman, *Medieval Readers and Writers 1350–1400* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), pp. 157–231; and M. T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066–1307*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993).

by the compiler.⁵⁸ The English poem *Hending* opens on a line not found in Digby 86 — ‘Mon þat wol of wysdam heren’ — and it is likely the work of the compiler.⁵⁹ The most gnomic variant of *Earth on Earth* to survive is grafted with a French-Latin epigram to allow meditation on universal mortality amidst instances of political glory and strife. It is the compiler who has selected and may even have edited into creation this haunting version. Derek Pearsall has commented of poetry in this period that ‘the scribe as much as the poet is the “author” of what we have in extant copies’.⁶⁰ The job of surveying the Harley texts against all extant copies elsewhere is work that has not yet been done. A key part of that operation should be to analyze the scribal alteration of beginnings and endings.

One must note another way that orality and literacy complement one another in Harley 2253. Sermons, debates, and lyrics have one effect if performed, another if yoked to more items on the page and read alongside them. In Harley 2253, folios 49–140, works rarely if ever stand alone. For example, each of the famous English monologues of complaint and invective is tempered by the scribe’s rhetoric of layout, where at least one other text serves as a surprising complement. *Satire on the Consistory Courts* goes with *The Labourers in the Vineyard* (a diptych on judgement and literacy); *Satire on the Retinues of the Great* goes with *Hending* (a diptych on folly and wisdom); *On the Follies of Fashion* goes with *The Execution of Sir Simon Fraser* (linked by last/first rhymes); *The Man in the Moon* goes with *Trailbaston* (linked by exile and outlawry); *Song of the Husbandman* goes with the love lyrics and *Marina* (linked by tones of discontent and thwarted desire).⁶¹ Modern readers naturally group these five poems by genre, colloquial idiom, alliterative effect, and class-based satire, but we need also to recognize that the

⁵⁸ Nolan, ‘Anthologizing Ribaldry’, pp. 306–09, 324–25.

⁵⁹ Judith Tschann and M. B. Parkes, intro., *Facsimile of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 86*, EETS, s.s., 16 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. xxvii (no. 52; fol. 140^v).

⁶⁰ Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, p. 120. See also J. A. Burrow, ‘Bards, Minstrels, and Men of Letters’, in *The Medieval World*, ed. by David Daiches and Anthony Thorlby (London: Aldus Books, 1973), pp. 347–70 (pp. 353–61).

⁶¹ These texts appear in *Alliterative Poetry of the Later Middle Ages: An Anthology*, ed. by Thorlac Turville-Petre (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1989), pp. 12–13, 17–20, 28–37. The diptych of *Satire on the Retinues* and *Hending* (fols 124^v–125^r) has not been previously noted. On the left side of the page-opening are foolish ‘gedlynges and gromes’ vainly seeking preferment in a social world beyond their reach; on the right, *Hending*’s vernacular proverbs deliver down-to-earth English wisdoms, with a hortatory opening unique to Harley 2253: ‘Mon þat wol of wysdam heren.’

scribe demonstrates specific reasons for bringing them into his anthology. Fortunately for their survival, he saw their potential for instructive linkage beside other, often quite contrastive texts.

These five poems hold special distinction in the vernacular verse record because we have little else like them to represent the social circumstances of the monoglot English in this period of multilingualism. As a protest against the oppression of the poor, *Husbandman* seems no less than a precursor to *Piers Plowman*.⁶² *The Man in the Moon* and *Satire on the Consistory Courts* are comedies that betray the speakers' frustrations when attempts are made to manoeuvre through legal traps set for wily peasants or illiterate servants. *Satire on the Retinues of the Great* and *On the Follies of Fashion* mock the low-born English who affect French ways either by serving lords as retainers or by imitating aristocratic fashions. We have not yet fully examined the remarkable performative and socio-linguistic valences of these items. When self-consciously literate poems, that is, poems composed with stanzaic and alliterative virtuosity, offer monologues from a rustic, discontented, yet aspirant class of poorly educated English folk, would not such poems call attention to intimate social disparities? If such lyrics were performed as live entertainments for bi- or trilingual native English people affecting prestige French in their everyday domestic and public lives, then an intriguing kind of ventriloquism becomes part of the staged performance. To what degree did they serve to defuse through laughter contemporary anxieties about social mobility and the changing cultural status of English? Was the scribe's very act of inscribing these performance pieces *in a book* — presumably transferring them from leaflet or roll — a novel thing to do in 1340? If so, was it done for fashion or for politics? In transferring ephemeral texts from the orality of performance (an oral subject voiced orally in the vernacular) to a permanent inscription of dialect and discontent, does the scribe consciously confer upon such texts a new status?

As historians of literature and books, we need to explore, furthermore, the embedded attitudes of those authors who purport to represent the views of an oppressed, uneducated, labouring populace, doing so, naturally enough, in English — a language not of their normal written practice, but likely of their own native

⁶² See Salter, *English and International*, pp. 158, 168–69; Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry*, pp. 123–24; Coleman, *Medieval Readers*, pp. 62–65; Richard Newhauser, 'Historicity and Complaint in *Song of the Husbandman*', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 203–17; and Stephen Knight, 'The Voice of Resistance in Fourteenth-Century English Literature', in *The Problem of Labour in Fourteenth-Century England*, ed. by James Bothwell, P. J. P. Goldberg, and W. M. Ormrod (York: York Medieval Press, 2000), pp. 101–22 (p. 117).

speech. The literary proficiency of these colourful poems exposes the artifice of recording the vocalized emotions of the illiterate, yet the colloquial idiom rings true. The first lines of *Song of the Husbandman* sweep from a narrator who *hears* a generalized, widespread moaning of men, those unable to record a speech or sing a song, to the specific man in misery:

Ich herde men vpo mold make muche mon,
 Hou he bep itened of here tilyynge:
 Gode 3eres ant corn, bope bep agon;
Ne kepeþ here no sawe ne no song synge! [. . .]
 Mai *Ich* no lengore lyve with mi lesinge!

The lyric performs a speech within a speech. Both voices are English, a *lered* man enclosing and reporting a *lewed* man's words. First, however, the narrator hears a generalized moan, a collective, specifically English sound made by all poor farmers, 'men vpo mold'. The aural/oral quality of this opening is essential to its social statement. Simultaneously, though, in Harley 2253, the ephemeral utterance is granted material presence and visual space in a book, where it enters the literate culture of both the speaking narrator and the Harley compiler. Inscription itself becomes fraught with the power it confers to the illiterate speaker, power that he might obtain only by proxy. The husbandman knows that the document sealed in green wax means oppressive, unfair taxation; without access to the written record, he is, however, powerless to fight it.⁶³

To understand the Harley scribe and his compilational purpose, we must continue to pursue refined studies of the many texts he purchased, borrowed, read, annotated, copied, altered, and set side by side with other texts in Harley 2253, Harley 273, and Royal 12. C. XII. Such empirical studies will help us to understand the Ludlow scribe's purpose as a collector of texts and construct over time a picture of his overall achievement and his literary sensibility. They will serve to correct wrong impressions gleaned simply by reading Harley lyrics, fabliaux, or political poems out of context, impressions made potentially more wrong when scribal agency becomes confused with authorship. It is from those who scrutinize the scribe line by line and word by word that we will draw our most accurate portrait. The evidence adduced above points to an attentive yet creative copyist, with a deeply literate/literary intelligence, acutely observant of linguistic nuance and difference, and open to manipulating texts in ways that extended

⁶³ On the husbandman's ability to read the green wax, see Richard Firth Green, *A Crisis of Truth: Literature and Law in Ricardian England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), p. 201; for a similar token in *The Man in the Moon*, see p. 270.

beyond exemplars. As Rosamund Allen, editor of *King Horn*, observes, the Harley scribe did not shy from making a text more emphatic than his copy, and when he redacted *Horn*, he demonstrated a scribal agility akin to minstrel skill, being able to improve and augment his exemplar by drawing upon another version committed to memory and adding some brilliant improvisation:

A clever scribe, well-versed in the tradition of romance diction and formulaic style, eludes detection in his manufacture of error by skilful scribal editing. [. . .] The Harley scribe must have been an interesting man; he was intelligent, and knew romances generally; he also knew by heart a better version of *KH* than the one in his exemplar. His individual rewriting does emerge, once one has isolated the authorial idiom, but many of his unique readings are still likely to be right. This is partly [. . .] to be explained by the man's intelligence: he guessed, and his guesses were right.⁶⁴

Allen's remarks, the fruit of an editor's critically exacting work, tell us a good deal more about the Harley scribe than does the fantasy concocted by Reed. While there is still much work to be done on Harley 2253 if we are to understand its scribal maker, we can now adjust the profile we have of his literary engagements, seeing him as a linguistically proficient cleric and legal scribe, an assiduous collector of texts, an occasional translator, an extremely clever compiler, and — however the practice was defined for West Midlands society — a master of entertainments and enrichments who cultivated the repertoire, versatility, and perhaps even the dramatic talents of a professional *jongleur*.

⁶⁴ *King Horn: An Edition Based on Cambridge University Library MS Gg. 4.27 (2)*, ed. by Rosamund Allen (New York: Garland, 1984), p. 62.

OPPOSITIONAL THEMATICS AND METANARRATIVE IN MS HARLEY 2253, QUIRES 1–6

Carter Revard

In previous discussions of certain Anglo-Norman poems in BL, MS Harley 2253,¹ I have argued that an important reason both for the scribe's inclusion and for his placement of these texts in the manuscript was that he meant to make this an anthology comparable to such earlier works as the *Disciplina Clericalis* of Petrus Alfonsus, and that in this he anticipated what Chaucer did in *The Canterbury Tales*.² One of these essays shows, for example, that 'A Goliard's

¹ We must look closely at all the texts — Middle English, Anglo-Norman, and Latin — of Harley 2253, and we must consider the scribe's compilatory placements and juxtapositions, as well as what we can learn from his selection and compilatory arrangements in his two other manuscripts (BL, MSS Harley 273 and Royal 12. C. XII), if we are to understand what kind of trilingual anthology Harley 2253 really is. It is a great pleasure to be joined in these efforts by Susanna Fein, whose essay in the present volume not only confirms much that I have argued for since 1979, but contains many fresh insights and excellent overall perspective.

² For Petrus Alfonsus, see John Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi and his Medieval Readers* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993). For Harley 2253 as anthology, see Carter Revard, 'Gilote et Johane: An Interlude in BL MS Harley 2253', *Studies in Philology*, 79 (1982), 122–46; 'The Outlaw's Song of Trailbaston', in *Medieval Outlaws*, ed. by Thomas Ohlgren (Stroud: Sutton, 1998), pp. 99–105; 'From French "Fabliau Manuscripts" and MS Harley 2253 to the *Decameron* and the *Canterbury Tales*', *Medium Ævum*, 69 (2000), 261–78; 'The Papelard Priest and the Black Prince's Men: Audiences of an Alliterative Poem, ca. 1350–1370', *Studies in the Age of Chaucer*, 23 (2001), 359–406; 'The Wife of Bath's Grandmother: Or, How Gilote Showed her Friend Johane that the Wages of Sin Is Worldly Pleasure, and How Both Then Preached This Gospel throughout England and Ireland', *Chaucer Review*, 39 (2004), 117–36; 'Four Fabliaux from London, BL MS Harley 2253, Translated into English Verse', *Chaucer Review*, 40 (2005), 111–41; and 'A Goliard's Feast and the Metanarrative of Harley 2253', *Revue Belge de Philologie et*

Feast', the Anglo-Norman poem copied onto folio 55^r, is in itself a self-satirizing text included both to teach the French language and to delight its readers/pupils; but the scribe's reason for setting this poem in Quire 6, directly facing the finale on folio 54^v of the martyrdom of St Ethelbert of Hereford, was to confront the final transformation of a saint with the perpetual gluttony of a sinner — an instance of his scribe's strategy in creating an anthology by arranging texts so as to bring out their thematic oppositions. The strategy produces a dialectic metanarrative, with repeated sequences of *sic et non* juxtapositions, creating a dramatic pageant, a lively procession of virtue and vice, sensual youth and impotent age, plausible sinners and martyred saints in carnival combat. Nor does the scribe neglect to set the timely alongside the timeless, for he copies poems from recent and contemporary history and politics: in one sequence (discussed further below), he sets a mocking Middle English poem that celebrates the 1264 triumph of Simon de Montfort alongside a mournful Anglo-Norman one that laments the 1265 defeat and death of Montfort, then follows these with a pairing of *memento mori* quatrains, one in Middle English, the other in Anglo-Norman (the latter capped by a summary line of Latin); and he includes poems of bitter protest against social corruption, political oppression, and exploitation of the poor and powerless by the rich and powerful.³

d'Histoire, 83 (2005), 841–67. For other discussions of Harley 2253 as anthology, see Susanna Fein, 'A Saint "Geynest under Gore": Marina and the Love Lyrics of the Seventh Quire', Barbara Nolan, 'Anthologizing Ribaldry: Four Anglo-Norman Fabliaux', and Theo Stemmler, 'Miscellany or Anthology? The Structure of Medieval Manuscripts: MS Harley 2253, for Example', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript: The Scribes, Contents, and Social Contexts of British Library MS Harley 2253*, ed. by Susanna Fein (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), pp. 351–76, 289–327, and 111–21; Seth Lerer, 'Medieval English Literature and the Idea of the Anthology', *PMLA*, 118 (2003), 1251–67; John Hines, *Voices in the Past: English Literature and Archaeology* (Cambridge: Brewer, 2004), chapter 2; and John Scahill, 'Trilingualism in Early Middle English Miscellanies: Languages and Literature', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 33 (2003), 18–32. Other relevant essays in *Yearbook of English Studies*, 33 (2003), include Andrew Taylor, 'Manual to Miscellany: Stages in the Continental Copying of Vernacular Literature in England', pp. 1–17; Neil Cartlidge, 'Festivity, Order, and Community in Fourteenth-Century Ireland: The Composition and Context of BL MS Harley 913', pp. 33–52; Jason O'Rourke, 'English and Latin Text in Welsh Contexts: Reflections of a Multilingual Society in National Library of Wales MS Peniarth 12', pp. 53–63; and Marilyn Corrie, 'Kings and Kingship in British Library MS Harley 2253', pp. 64–79.

³ These collocations of Montfortian poems with succeeding Middle English, Anglo-Norman, and Latin quatrains are discussed in Revard, 'Outlaw's Song of Trailbaston'; 'From French "Fabliau Manuscripts" and MS Harley 2253 to the *Decameron* and the *Canterbury Tales*'; and 'The Papelard Priest and the Black Prince's Men'.

The present essay looks further into the scribe's compilation of his anthology, setting in context his choice and arrangement of texts in Quires 5 and 6. It shows that to understand his placement of texts such as 'A Goliard's Feast' within Quire 6, we must look back — not only at the preceding Quire 5 (the first quire in his own hand), but at the first four quires of the manuscript, which are not in his hand, yet within which his hand has added rubric titles for some of its texts, showing that he read them closely.⁴ This evidence supports the speculative account, offered in the present essay, of his first steps in compiling the entire manuscript, both the first four quires (fols 1–48) that he obtained or was given, and quires 5–15 (fols 49–140), which he copied in his own hand. Quires 1–2 (fols 1–22) contain a copy of the *Vitas patrum* (note that this is actually a collection of anecdotes, wise sayings, *obiter dicta* from saints, abbots, and holy men — useful to a parish chaplain in need of preaching material), plus the life of Thais (the courtesan who became saint and martyr); Quire 3 (fols 23–34) is from the versified Bible history of Hermann of Valenciennes; Quire 4 (fols 35–48) includes the *Gospel of Nicodemus* (within which he used marginal rubrics to mark the epistles of Tiberius and Claudius) and the *vitae* of St John Evangelist, St John Baptist, and St Bartholomew, as well as an account of the martyrdom of St Peter. To go with this gathering of saints and (in Thais) a sinner/saint, he then chose, arranged, and copied his own anthology of saints and sinners (Quires 5–15).

To observe these facts helps us understand the scribe-compiler's selection and sequencing of texts in Quires 5–6 — the first quires in his hand, set just after the textura *Vitas patrum* and other items he had acquired, and at the head of the anthology he then compiled, copied, and appended to them. More crucially, to see this lets us grasp the central principles, the underlying metanarrative, by which he ordered the entire manuscript, with Quires 1–4 now clearly visible not merely as a booklet that the scribe bound up with the anthology he copied out, but as the first part of the full anthology which he put together.

Quires 1–4 (fols 1–48): Lives of Saints

As Ker noted, folios 1–48 are 'written in a professional textura of the late thirteenth century', but for seven of its texts, and on two margins within one of them,

⁴ Pointed out by N. R. Ker, *Facsimile of British Museum MS. Harley 2253*, EETS, o.s., 255 (Oxford, 1965), p. ix, n. 4.

cursive rubric titles were added by the scribe of Quires 5–15.⁵ A date of *c.* 1330–31 for this rubrication seems likely, judging by one key feature in the scribe's handwriting which he changed between 1329 and 1331: his way of making the mark over the letter *i*, which in all nineteen of the deeds he wrote from 1314 through 1329 was a simple curved mark, but in the twenty-two he wrote from 1331 through 1349 is often a double hook (at top and bottom). In the rubrics on folios 1–48, his marks over *i* resemble those in his two legal deeds of 1331, but those on folio 39^r in his rubric *epistle a tyb[er]ie* look most like the transitional form (perhaps from 1330) found in BL, MS Royal 12. C. XII.⁶ If his rubrications on folios 1–48 indeed date from *c.* 1330–31, they were done just for or when he began compiling and copying the present folios 49–140, because most of that copying looks closer to his legal deeds of 1331–41, though the *Vita Sancti Wistani* on the final page, folio 140^v, was written *c.* 1347.⁷ In other words, to create the

⁵ Ker, *Facsimile*, p. xvi. Examination of fols 1–48 of Harley 2253, kindly made possible by the staff of the British Library, confirms that the scribe added nine rubrics. On fol. 1^r: *Vitas patrum*. Rubric at head of col. 1. The mark above the *i* of *Vitas* is neither the hooked form he used in his legal deeds from 1331 to 1349 (it resembles the bottom part of such a hook: a cup-shaped curve, right side rising higher than the left), nor is it the lid-like tick over *i* that the scribe used in deeds from 1314 to 1329. No other rubrics added to or within texts of the *vitae* on fols 1–22. On fol. 23^r: above the line, at head of col. 1 the scribe wrote the rubric title: *la passioun n[ost]re Seignour*. Over the *i* in *Seignour* he placed a hooked form like that over *i* in his deeds from 1331 to 1349. On fol. 33^v: in col. 1 at end (line 20) of the text of *La Passioun nostre seignour*, the scribe wrote a rubric heading for following text (*Gospel of Nicodemus*): *De la passioun Jh[es]u*; no mark over *i*. In left margin beside lines 12–13, a later hand wrote *Evangelium Nicodemi*. On fol. 39^r: in right margin of col. 2, seventh line from bottom, the scribe has written *epistle a tyb[er]ie*. Over the *i* of *epistle* the scribe drew a faint vertical line slanting rightward; over the *i* of *tyb[er]ie* another red vertical, also slanting rightward, but in this case with a very tenuous apparent hook at the bottom, and a curve further right at the top that hints at a hook. These two lines look like some of the 'i-marks' in his two 1331 deeds, which in turn look just a little more assured and crisply made than those found on the page of this scribe's other manuscript to which N. R. Ker pointed as illustrating the transitional stage between the scribe's earlier style and his later: fol. 76^r of Royal 12. C. XII, a facsimile of which Ker included as the final page in his *Facsimile*. On fol. 39^v: in left margin twelve lines from bottom of col. 1, the scribe wrote *epistle a clau/die lempour*. with no marks over the *i* of *epistle* or that of *claudie*. On fol. 41^v: col. 1, line 8, rubric title *De S' John le ewangel*; each minim of *John* is marked with a backward apostrophe, perhaps so they will not be taken as forms of *i*. On fol. 43^v: col. 2, eighteenth line from bottom, rubric *De S' iohan le baptist*. with no marks over either *i*. On fol. 45^v: col. 2 middle, rubric *De S' bartholomeu*. On fol. 47^v: right column, rubric *Passioun seint pierre*. No marks over *i* forms.

⁶ See fol. 76^r illustrated on the final page in Ker, *Facsimile*, and see Ker's discussion, p. xx, n. 6.

⁷ In a letter of 14 August 1976 to the present author, Dr Ker wrote, 'the resemblance between the Wistan page in Harley [fol. 140^v] and Shrewsbury 356/MT/1247 of 1347 is very striking',

whole anthology, he took the four already acquired textura quires of folios 1–48, rubricated them about 1331, and eventually bound them together with the eleven further quires of folios 49–140 that he mostly copied between 1331 and 1341, thus producing what is now his complete anthology of saints and sinners.

In sum: Ker's Item 1, which fills Quires 1 and 2 (fols 1–22), is the *Vitas patrum*, to which is added a *Life of Thais*.⁸ Ker notes that all six items 2–7 (fols 23–48) are in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français 19525, and of these, items 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 are also in BL, MS Egerton 2710 — which may well imply that there were monastic or universitypecia-copiers who produced these texts *en bloc*. These items are (2) the versified Bible History of Herman of Valenciennes, for which the scribe supplies the rubric title *La passioun nostre seignour*; (3) the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, which he rubricates *De la passioun Ihesu*; and four *vitae* which he gives rubric titles: (4) *De S' Iohan le ewangel*; (5) *De S' Iohan le baptist*; (6) *De S. bartholomeu*; and (7) *Passioun seint pierre*.⁹

If we ask who would have wanted all the lives of saints in Quires 1–4 enough to bind them together with an anthology that he mostly created in the 1330s and finished in the early 1340s, the most plausible answer would be someone who wanted to know both the lives/ideas of the Desert Fathers (*Vitas patrum*, fols 1–22) and the lives of the 'added' saints — presumably because he might need to preach about or discuss them. That would be a parish chaplain, curate, or parson,

adding on 5 October 1980, 'I am perfectly prepared to think that fol. 140^v was written in about the middle of September 1347'.

⁸ See Keith Sinclair, 'The Translations of the *Vitas patrum*, *Thaïs*, *Antichrist*, and *Vision de Saint Paul* Made for Anglo-Norman Templars: Some Neglected Literary Considerations', *Speculum*, 72 (1997), 741–62. The Harley text has not been printed in its entirety, but Paul Meyer presents extracts from each of the two manuscripts in 'Versions en vers et en prose des Vies des pères', *Histoire littéraire de la France*, 33 (1906), 254–458, while the passages unique to Harley are appended to the full edition of the Paris text, *Henri d'Arce's Vitas patrum: A Thirteenth-Century Anglo-Norman Rimed Translation of the Verba seniorum*, ed. by B. A. O'Connor (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1949). Lines 142–70 of the Harley text of *Vita sanctae Thais meretricis* were printed by Paul Meyer, 'Versions en vers et en prose des Vies des pères', *Histoire littéraire de la France*, 33 (1906), 254–458. See Brigitte Cazelles, trans., 'The Life of Saint Thais', in *The Lady as Saint: A Collection of French Hagiographic Romances of the Thirteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), pp. 289–302 (p. 309).

⁹ Ker, *Facsimile*, p. ix, note on Item 2. *La Passioun nostre seignour* is part of a longer work based on the Bible (*Li Romanz de Dieu et de sa mere*) which survives in varying states of wholeness in thirty-five manuscripts (see *Li Romanz de Dieu et de sa mere d'Herman de Valenciennes, chanoine et prêtre (XII^e siècle)*, ed. by Ina Spiele (Leyde: Presse universitaire de Leyde, 1975), pp. 144–59), with Harley belonging to a group of three that similarly select out the Passion narrative.

or a monk or friar. But who would particularly want *vitae* of the four ‘added’ saints on folios 41^v–48 — St John Evangelist, St John Baptist, St Bartholomew, and St Peter? Most plausibly, someone who might be called upon to preach or serve in one or several Ludlow-area churches under patronage of those four saints — as well as in the locales of saints whose lives he copied into folios 49–140: St Ethelbert of Hereford Cathedral, St Etfrid of Leominster, and St Wistan of Wistanstow, to whose *vitae* scholars have exclusively looked in trying to identify and locate the scribe, because they are written in his own hand. It seems no coincidence that the four ‘added’ saints in folios 41–48 are those of the scribe’s working area: St John Evangelist is patron of the Palmers’ Gild in Ludlow parish Church of St Lawrence; St John Baptist is patron saint of the Ludlow Hospital of St John Baptist; the parish Church of St Bartholomew is three miles south of Ludlow in Richard’s Castle; and the Church of St Peter is at Leominster Priory, ten miles south of Ludlow. About 1314 this scribe had acquired a Ludlow psalter (now BL, MS Harley 273); he wrote thirty-nine of his forty-one charters from 1314 to 1349 either in Ludlow or between there and Richard’s Castle, which is three miles south of Ludlow; and one charter is dated from Richard’s Castle in 1347.

In sum: by the early 1330s this scribe had acquired a coherent *textura* copy of lives of saints and martyrs, which he made sure also included four patron saints of local churches in or just south of Ludlow where he worked at his legal scrivening. Then, probably also in the early 1330s, he copied into what became Quire 6 of Harley 2253 the *Vita* of St Ethelbert of Hereford (fols 53^r–54^v) and onto folios 132–33 the *Vita* of St Etfrid of Leominster; *c.* 1347 he added St Wistan of Wistanstow on folio 140^v. He also during the 1330s was producing a copy of the Hereford Cathedral Ordinal, draft fragments of which are on the flyleaves of Harley 2253 at folios i^v and 142^r.¹⁰ His manuscript therefore contained the *vitae*, when he had finished selecting and copying them, of the patron saints of Hereford Cathedral as well as of most churches near Ludlow.

Consider, now, two small facts noted by Ker in his discussion of the manuscript’s dimensions and ruling: first, that the written space on folios 1–48 ‘is a frame measuring *c.* 215 x 130 mm. divided into two columns, and the columns contain 47 to 51 horizontal lines on which the scribe based his writing’; and second, that in all of folios 49–140 as copied by the main scribe, ‘only two, folios 53 and 54, have this conventional layout and ruling and even here the dimensions of the frame and the number of lines to the column vary from page to page and even from column to column on the same page. Elsewhere the scribe preferred to write

¹⁰ For the draft of the Hereford Cathedral Ordinal, see Ker, *Facsimile*, p. ix.

prose in a single column and to rule as little as possible.¹¹ The importance of these facts is that the main text written onto folios 53 and 54 in this unusual format is the *Vita Sancti Ethelberti* — which is the first text of Quire 6.¹² Comparison with the internally dated legal documents in this scribe's hand shows, I believe, that the scribe's crisp style in the *Vita Sancti Ethelberti* is slightly earlier than in most of the rest of folios 49–140, and looks close to his four documents from 1331–33.¹³

I suggest, therefore, that the *Vita Sancti Ethelberti* was the very first text that this scribe copied when he began to produce the anthology that now comprises folios 49–140. This might imply that when he first began working on what eventually became Harley 2253, he was merely copying out a very important local saint's life, that of Ethelbert, to add to what he already had acquired, his *textura* collection of early saints' lives (now fols 1–48 of Harley 2253). Perhaps the scribe was called on to preach on the Feast of St Ethelbert (May 20), or merely preparing in case he were called on. One may speculate further: candidates for ordination to priestly orders were examined by the bishop's representatives; and in preparation for this it might have been wise for a deacon hoping to be ordained priest, especially if he were serving as parish chaplain or assistant priest or vicar, to know these lives of local patron-saints. If by 1330 our Harley 2253 scribe was, say, a parish chaplain of Richard's Castle, he might have been either Thomas or Richard de Billebury: Thomas de Billebury was ordained priest on 2 June 1330 to the title of the Chantry of the Virgin Mary in the parish Church of St Bartholomew in Richard's Castle (he seems to have been chantry-chaplain there from 1316); while Richard de Billebury was ordained acolyte in 1334, subdeacon in 1334–35, and deacon in 1337, to the title of the Hospital of St John, Blithelow (in Richard's Castle). A 1330 examination of Thomas de Billebury before his ordination as priest could conceivably have been one for which he prepared by acquiring and studying lives of the local saints; alternatively, examinations before the 1334–37 ordinations of Richard de Billebury could have provided such occasion.¹⁴

¹¹ Ker, *Facsimile*, p. xvii.

¹² Note, however, that the Goliard/Glutton poem on fol. 55^r is written as prose in a two-column format just like that allotted to Ethelbert, a format that makes it hard to discern the poem's rhyme-scheme and stanzaic form, as Ker notes with asperity (*Facsimile*, p. xvii). St Ethelbert and the Glutton, as it were, are similarly confined.

¹³ See plates 20, 21, 22, and 23 in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 45–47; deeds dated from Overton, Ludford, Steventon, and Ludlow, in 1331 and 1333.

¹⁴ For Thomas Billebury's ordination in 1330, see *Register of Thomas Charlton, Bishop of Hereford* (London: Canterbury and York Society, 1913), p. 115. For Richard de Billebury, see

Looking again at folios 1–48, we recall that (as Ker pointed out) the last four lives (fols 41–48), those of saint-patrons of the scribe's home area, are found *en bloc* in a French manuscript, BnF f. fr. 19525, and an English one, Egerton 2710: evidently the scribe acquired such a ready-made set, which he then rubricated for personal use. He was certainly a legal scrivener, as the forty-one extant deeds in his hand show, and he was surely a chaplain who handled parochial and liturgical duties, as shown by his possession of Harley 273, a Ludlow psalter that includes also a copy (partly in this scribe's hand) of the *Manuel des péchés*, made for priests or vicars or parish chaplains. Might he perhaps have acquired his gathering of saints' lives (fols 1–48) in Oxford, while pursuing clerical, grammatical, and legal studies that he needed for his work as legal scrivener and chaplain?¹⁵

In any case, evidence in Quires 1–6, combined with evidence from the scribe's other manuscripts and his legal work, indicates that by 1330 he had acquired a textura copy of the *Vitas patrum* as well as certain other lives of saints of special interest in his local area (Ludlow and vicinity), and that he began in the early 1330s to copy out a *Vita Sancti Ethelberti* to go with those earlier lives. But between the textura folios 1–48 and the *Vita Sancti Ethelberti* on folios 53–54, there now is a whole quire of other material, Quire 5 (fols 49–52). This quire, however, has only two bifolia, into which only two poems have been copied, and in these two poems the scribe, as one might expect from a compiler of his intelligence and orderliness, has shown the reader what to expect in this anthology: rightly read, the poems tell both its master themes and organizing principle. They are Anglo-Norman poems: the *ABC à femmes* (Ker, Item 8, fols 49–50), in single-column format, and a 'Debate of Summer and Winter' (Ker, Item 9, fols 51–52), in double-column layout. They are followed, in Quire 6, by the *Vita Sancti Ethelberti*, also in double columns, folios 53^r–54^{vb}, below which in a lighter ink he places an indulgenced prayer composed by Pope John XXII, *Anima Christi sanctifica me*. Next, on folio 55^r, he copies — in the same two-column format, and

Register of Thomas Charlton, pp. 142, 150, 155, 173. A William de Billebury, Canon of Haughmond Abbey, was ordained acolyte by Charlton in Hereford Cathedral on 14 June 1337 (*Register of Thomas Charlton*, p. 171). Other clerical Billeburys can be traced in the episcopal registers of other bishops of Hereford: Richard Swinfield (1283–1317), Adam Orleton (1317–27), and John Trillek (1344–60).

¹⁵ H. G. Richardson, 'Business Training in Medieval Oxford', *American Historical Review*, 46 (1941), 259–80; *Formularies Which Bear on the History of Oxford, c.1204–1420*, ed. by H. E. Salter, W. A. Pantin, and H. G. Richardson, 2 vols, Oxford Historical Society, n.s., 4–5 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1942).

as prose — ‘A Goliard’s Feast’. And overleaf from this, on folios 55^v–56^v, he puts the *Harrowing of Hell*. In a moment we will consider these placements and juxtapositions.

Quire 5 (fols 49–52): Key to the Metanarrative

Consider first, however, what the two poems in Quire 5 tell us of the scribe’s plan and procedure in making his anthology. As mentioned, he set Quire 5 at the head of all the eleven quires in his hand (fols 49–140) — and in its two Anglo-Norman poems, one may see the whole book’s main themes and the principle by which its texts will be arranged.¹⁶ In the first text, *ABC à femmes*, the speaker tells us that this poem is made (as is, we infer, the anthology) for those who owe faith and loyalty to the Lady of Paradise (Mary), and particularly to honour women. Here is what the first poem he copied says, in its first stanza, on this point:

Quy a la dame de parays	Whoever to the Lady of Paradise
deyuent foy e leaute,	owes faith and loyalty,
ore entendent a mes dis,	now harken to what I say,
e ie lur dirroy verite:	and I will tell you truth:
Si nul y soit qe eit mespris	If there be any who has ill-treated
vers femme par maueste,	a woman out of malice,
de cortesyie soit forbanys,	in the name of Courtesy let him be banished,
ou hastiement soit redresse	unless he quickly redress the matter
A dreyt,	as is but right,
quar il pert sa noretur,	for truly he abandons all good breeding
certes, que femme deceit.	who betrays a woman.

¹⁶ The ‘Debate’ is completed at fol. 52^{va}, line 24, and the scribe left blank the rest of the page, a column and a half into which, in a lighter ink, a scribe with very different but probably contemporary hand has copied a set of recipes — mostly for making colours to illuminate manuscripts (Ker, *Facsimile*, items 10–17). For discussion of the *ABC à femmes*, see Mary Dove, ‘Evading Textual Intimacy’, in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 329–49, esp. pp. 330–32; for its Middle English counterpart in the Auchinleck manuscript (Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates’ MS 19. 2. 1), see Oliver Pickering, ‘Stanzaic Verse in the Auchinleck Manuscript: *The Alphabetical Praise of Women*’, in *Studies in Late Medieval and Early Renaissance Texts in Honour of John Scattergood*, ed. by Anne Marie D’Arcy and Alan J. Fletcher (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), pp. 287–304. For the ‘Debate of Summer and Winter’, see Karl Reichl, ‘Debate Verse’, in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 219–39, esp. pp. 219–28; for an edition of its Anglo-Norman text and a literal facing translation of it, see *Medieval Debate Poetry: Vernacular Works*, ed. by Michel-André Bossy, Garland Library of Medieval Literature, 52A (New York: Garland, 1987), text and trans. pp. 2–15, notes pp. 162–63.

Dieu m'auaunce par charite,	May God speed me, of His charity,
auxi come j'ay mestier:	in measure equal to my task:
Je froi a femmes vn a.b.c.,	I will make for women an ABC,
a l'escole si eles vueillent aler—	if they wish to go to school,—
Celes que sunt letree	Those who are literate
as autres purront recorder	can explain to the others
Coment eles sunt honoree	how they are so honoured
en dreiture sauntz fauser,	of very right and without any flaw
de nulle.	of any kind.
Ou va femme, la vet ioie,	Where a woman goes, there goes joy,
e le ne va pas soule.	she goes not alone.

Here, I believe, the scribe sets out the central purpose of his anthology. This poem's speaker, like a teacher and chaplain to a household (or, perhaps, chaplain of the Virgin Mary in the parish Church of St Bartholomew in Richard's Castle?), an avuncular Nun's Priest or Friar, at the beginning of his book tells us that it is made especially to honour women (as well as men). In lines 13–14 he says he will make an ABC for women who want to go to school, from which the literate ones may learn and teach the others how much they have been honoured — which, an alert reader knows, means the honour that God gave women when he chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus. This theme recurs throughout the anthology in courtly/gentle Anglo-Norman texts and well-crafted Middle English poems like 'The Poet's Repentance' (fol. 66^v). Thus, his first quire's first text identifies women as a key part of his chosen audience, and the *Bonté de femmes* (with special attention and honour to the Virgin Mary) as a theme central to his anthology's metanarrative. *Blasme de femmes*, as we will later see, is the 'wintry' side of this. The rest of the poem is an elaborate affirmation of this message in twenty-three variations — one for each letter of the medieval alphabet — plus five more stanzas. So in Quire 5, the scribe's very first text identifies women as an important part of his chosen audience, and the *Bonté des femmes* (with special attention and honour to the Virgin Mary) as a master theme that his anthology will pick up repeatedly as central to its metanarrative.

From his second text, the 'Debate of Summer and Winter', we learn how his book will be organized and what its key themes will be.¹⁷ In this poem the book's

¹⁷ Karl Reichl points out ('Debate Verse', p. 226 and n. 18) that scholars have attributed this 'Debate' to the Franciscan friar Nicholas Bozon (fl. 1320–50). For Bozon's life and work, with a number of his poems, see David Jeffrey and Brian Levy, *The Anglo-Norman Lyric* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1987), pp. 14–16; they refer to the *Debat de l'Yver et de l'Este* as one of his 'allegorical works', but say the attribution is uncertain (p. 15). They note that

major adversary appears in the form of a rude, boisterous, gluttonous lord Winter, whose *grant estrif* (line 1) with the gentle but at last triumphant Summer the poem narrates. Significantly, Summer's triumph comes when he identifies Winter as a son of Satan and himself as sent from paradise to drive him out and make the people better (lines 224–41):

Si vus estes de halt parage—	You come, it's true, of high ancestry—
Bien savom de quel lignage	well we know from what lineage
Estes issaunt.	you are derived.
Dreizt est que facez utrage:	It's fitting that you commit outrages,
Bien savoms que futes page,	we know quite well you were a page
Parfond a val,	in the deep abyss
Lucifer e son neveu.	to Lucifer and his grandson.
De li estes meyntenu	By him you are maintained
De fere mal.	in doing evil:
vus estes son parent e son dru,	You are his kin and his beloved,
e de mal fere tenz son lu	for evil-doing you're his chief
especial.	lieutenant.
Je ne su pas de ly apris,	I was not taught by him,
quar tot le mal nus ad conquis	for all evil was won for us by
Daunz Lucifer.	Lord Lucifer.
Je su de Parais transmys	I have been sent from Heaven
pur vus remuer del pays,	to drive you out of this country,
e gent amender.	and make the people better.

We understand, from the poem's first two lines ('Un grant estrif oy l'autrer | entre Este e Sire Yuer'), that these mighty opposites are always with us, that their fierce and endless strife embodies the very nature of the fallen world that we have

Bozon, who may have been one of the Bozons of Norfolk, or possibly related to the Bohuns of Hereford, was 'probably a member' of the Franciscan friary at Nottingham, and since that was under Oxford custody, he 'very likely went to Oxford to study' (p. 14), perhaps when his fellow Franciscan William Herebert lectured there c. 1315–20. For 'Bozon' as apparently of the Bohun family, see also David Jeffrey, 'Authors, Anthologists, and Franciscan Spirituality', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 261–70, esp. pp. 263 and 269–70 — though Jeffrey does not mention the 'Debate of Summer and Winter' as one of this friar's poems. See also *Medieval Debate Poetry: Vernacular Works*, ed. by Bossy, pp. 2–15 and nn. 162–63. Much work by Bozon is found in BL, MS Additional 46919 — the collection assembled and in considerable part copied by Herebert (though the Bozon material is not in his hand, but a perhaps later cursive), who was a member of the friary at Hereford, and the scribe of Harley 2253 could well have known Herebert and possibly Bozon. Nottingham was in the diocese of York, and we may wonder whether some of the Harley Lyrics marked by their dialects as of northern provenance might have travelled south to Oxford, Ludlow, or Hereford with Bozon or other Franciscans.

inhabited since Eden was lost — and yet, as the *ABC à femmes* has just in effect told its readers, *la dame de Parays*, as she is named in the first line of the *ABC*, has now redeemed this fallen world: one woman lost Eden, but one woman has retrieved it for those who owe her faith and loyalty, so just as winter will always give way to summer in the natural world, we can always recover paradise in the spiritual world. In the lines quoted above, when Summer points out that Winter ‘is descended from Lucifer’, we recall Lucifer’s being traditionally described as ‘of the north’. And Summer has been sent from paradise to drive Winter out of the country and make things better for people: ‘Je su de Parais transmys | pur vus remuer del pays | e gent amender.’ As Reichl says ‘it is Summer who wins the contest (lines 194–287)’.¹⁸ Moreover, Summer carefully assigns to women as judges the final task of deciding the victor in this contest (lines 275–77):

E vus, puceles, que tant amez,	And you, maidens, who love so well,
Je vus requier que vus rendez	I implore you to deliver
Le jugement.	The verdict.

However, both scribe and readers understood that ‘winning’ here does not mean Winter is ‘removed from the country’ forever. We live, after all, in the fallen world, where the Devil has power to try our souls — a point made with great force and clarity by Chaucer’s pilgrim Friar in his scathing satire on the secular Church and its corrupt and greedy minister, the Summoner. And even though Summer is better, Winter says truly that Summer brings its own pains and troubles (lines 83–85): ‘flies, lizards, toads, and stinking snakes’ — which Winter rids us of. The *Harley Lyrics*, *Gilote et Johane*, and other pieces, as the scribe rolls them out, will show that with love, as with Summer, come many pains and evils, and that Summer and Winter alternate in the world we know — indeed, that we ‘know’ the one by ‘knowing’ the other.¹⁹ Next to St Ethelbert, the scribe will place the

¹⁸ ‘Debate Verse’, p. 221.

¹⁹ Summer, we note, takes care to differentiate his feasting from Winter’s gluttony, in lines 134–42:

Mes quant je vienke, je porte assez	But when I come, I carry enough
chars noveles e deintez	New meats and dainties
pur mei servyr:	To serve my turn:
le buef freysh e veneyssoun—	Fresh beef and venison—
dount ja ne eu vndres ton gernoun	Whose juices won’t wet your whiskers
si n’est salee!	Unless they’re salt-cured!
Je ne su pas frere a glotoun,	I’m no brother to Glutton,
Pur estrangler le viel motoun	To choke myself on old mutton
enfumee!	All smoky!

Goliard, whose self-satirizing monologue shows how like he is to the gluttonous retainers of Winter (his first line, after all, seems to introduce a 'winter song', beginning *Quant voy la revenue d'yver*, 'When I see the return of winter') — and also, surprisingly, how like to hedonists in Summer's train. Indeed, the Goliard inhabits precisely the space provided for him by the words of Summer and Winter, as may be illustrated by comparing his words with theirs: see, for instance, the 'Debate of Summer and Winter' lines 133–41 (Summer) and lines 156–71 (Winter), in comparison with the gluttonous soliloquy of 'A Goliard's Feast' (see lines 58 and following).²⁰ Winter may be satanic, but he is correct in pointing out the dangers and defects of Summer; and Summer certainly puts his finger on the dangers and defects of Winter. The Goliard's monologue combines, one might say, the defects of both, but one sees this best by realizing that behind the Goliard's dream of year-round feasting, the medieval reader would see the Church's calendar of feasts of a kind supposedly very different. Of course for Summer-lovers every saint's eve is a good time to find a new lover, or husband as the case may be.

Here, we have reached the central principle of the anthology-maker. The notion that we know everything by its contrary, so that to know anything we need to look also at its contrary, is the scribe's central ordering principle for his

If we compare Summer's words with those of the Goliard, we see that the latter is indeed the Glutton whom Summer insists he is *not*, even though the Goliard at first speaks fastidiously (lines 45–50), like Summer, more as gourmet than gourmand:

Menues hastes en bruaz	On small spits for broiling,
De pourcel madle osee,	some boar-meat roasted,
Pris en bone pasture—	taken in good pasturage (well-fed)—
La loygne sauntz arsue,	the loin unburnt
En la broche botee,	thrust on the spike,
Quar c'est ma noretur!	For that's my kind of life!

After this, the gourmand side of the Goliard at once takes over.

²⁰ Perhaps the clearest and fullest evidence for the scribe's use of this organizing principle is in Quires 8 and 9, fols 73–83, where two patriotic historical poems are followed by a block of divine love-songs in French and English, and these are accompanied and sometimes intercalated with poems of *gentillesse* and repentance and *noblesse oblige*. Larger patterns appear as we view the transitions and thematic relations among texts and text groups on these folios. The scribe first, in fols 73^v–75^v, offers perspectives on the nature of kingship, earthly and divine, then goes on (fols 76–77) to display the alternations of Winter and Summer, the oppositions and parallels of Youth and Age, fleshly and divine love. The sufferings of young lovers are juxtaposed to those of Christ on the Cross, culminating on fols 80^v–81^v in a trio of *contrafacta* (not previously recognized as such by scholars) and a *pastourelle* in which the beautiful beloved maiden is Mary and the song is of her Five Joys.

anthology.²¹ He will set happy love beside wretched love, the perfect woman by the faithless one, the young lover beside the old impotent. Nor will it be only Youth and Age, Love and Death, Spring and Winter that will alternate in these pages. As has been pointed out above, in one ‘political poem’ (in Middle English), we will hear the triumph of a Montfort partisan who mocks the captured Prince Edward; in the next ‘political poem’ (in Anglo-Norman), we hear the lament of a Montfort partisan for the death of Simon de Montfort, defeated and mutilated by Prince Edward — and, later, we will hear in another ‘political poem’ (fol. 73) an elegy lamenting the great King Edward I, whom that mocked and then triumphant Prince Edward became. In short, this anthology’s metanarrative is exemplified in the first two poems at its beginning — a metanarrative that then unfolds as a multivariable story of *Discordia Concors*, the kind of metanarrative that Petrus Alfonsus gave readers of his *Disciplina Clericalis*. The scribe sets out to show us good by showing us evil, and vice versa — a complex story, not incidentally, that Milton found of interest in *Paradise Lost*.

Quire 6 (fols 53–62): The Metanarrative Is Rolled Out

We may turn now to Quire 6, and look at the scribe’s sequencing of texts in its five bifolia, particularly the texts before and after ‘A Goliard’s Feast’ (fol. 55^r). To repeat what was said above, the first text of this quire is a saint’s life in Latin — the *Vita Sancti Ethelberti*. It ends half-way down column 2 (at line 17) on folio 54^v, and the scribe has later filled about half the space left in this column with the rhyming prayer *Anima Christi sanctifica me* (fol. 54^{vb}, lines 18–30), ending with the gloss that whoever recites it devoutly will get three days off from punishment-time in Purgatory. Directly facing these two sacred texts, on the next recto (fol. 55^r), the scribe has placed the self-satirizing ‘A Goliard’s Feast’ — a monologue in French verse, which precisely fills the page’s seventy-four lines with thirty-seven lines in each column; and we notice how this Goliard echoes lord Winter yet also sounds like a hedonistic follower of Summer. Next, overleaf from this Anglo-Norman Glutton, the scribe places (fols 55^v–56^v) the Middle English *Harrowing*

²¹ The notion that we know good by knowing evil was of course hardly new or unique with the Harley 2253 scribe and his book. Of a key speech that Chaucer assigns to Pandarus (*Troilus and Criseyde* Bk. 1, lines 624–45, *Riverside Chaucer*, ed. by L. D. Benson, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988)), for instance, the gist is given in its final line (645), ‘Sith thus of two contraries is o lore’. The speech itself is a set of commonplaces drawn from such sources (as cited in editorial notes, e.g. pp. 1028–29) as Boethius’s *Consolation* and the *Roman de la Rose*.

of Hell and follows this (fols 57–58) with the Middle English *Debate between the Body and the Soul*, in which the Soul (all too literally) gives Hell back to the Body.

In Quire 6, folios 53–58, therefore, the scribe has led his readers from saint's life to indulgenced prayer to sinner's monologue, then to a dramatic account of Christ's rescuing the righteous from Hell itself, and on to a vivid debate between a Body, which has repented too late, and its Soul, which laments that the Body has condemned it to Hell—ending on folio 58^v with these lines:

Fare we shule to a bour that is oure long hom,
nouthur more ne lasse bote from the hed to ton:
ther shal rotie ure fleysh al to the bon.
When the flor is at thy rug, the rof ys at thy neose,
al this worldes blisse nis nout worth a peose:
bote yef Jhesu Cristes merci among us more were,
to wrothere hele that ever we in londe comen here—
to thin holy halewen, Crist, bring us alle yfere. Amen.

What follows this reminder of the doom awaiting those who follow the flesh's desires for power, wealth, and pleasure? Onto the page just beneath the gloomy final lines of *Body and Soul* (fol. 58^v), the scribe has set a Middle English poem, *Sitteth alle stille and herkneth to me*, celebrating the 1264 triumph of Simon de Montfort and the Barons, and mocking the defeated King Henry III, Prince Edward, and Richard of Cornwall. And then the scribe has begun on the next recto (fol. 59^r), facing this Middle English *sirventes*, a 'Lament for Simon de Montfort', which deplores the 1265 defeat, death, and mutilation of Montfort by the Prince, the King, and Richard of Cornwall. Commentators have almost all discussed only the Middle English poem, or the French poem, in isolation and have taken their presence as evidence of the scribe's Montfortian sympathies, which it may well be; but the pairing of these pieces into a diptych of triumph and tragedy should make us suspect that the scribe's real perspective is not merely partisan.²² This suspicion is fully confirmed when we observe that the scribe has placed, just below the 'Lament for Simon de Montfort' on folio 59^v two quatrains

²² See note 3 above. Another version of the 'Lament for Simon de Montfort' is found in TCD, MS 347, in a copy dating from thirteenth century and thus some forty years earlier than that in Harley 2253; for the TCD 347 version, see H. Shields, 'The *Lament for Simon de Montfort*: An Unnoticed Text of the French Poem', *Medium Ævum*, 41 (1972), 202–07. TCD 347 is described in Marvin L. Colker, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Medieval and Renaissance Latin Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin*, introd. by William O'Sullivan, 2 vols (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1991), I, 710–40. TCD 347 is apparently of Franciscan provenance as Shields notes, pp. 202–03.

— one in Middle English, one in French — both pointing out the vanity and futility of mortal aspirations to power and fleshly gratifications: ‘Earth upon Earth’ in Middle English, *Charnel Amour Est Folie* in French, with the last two lines of the French neatly translated into Latin:

brief delit est lecherie,	momentaneum est quod delectat,
mes sanz fyn dure le torment.	sed eternum quod cruciat.

In retrospect, therefore, we see that the texts of folios 53–59 comprise a sequence of pairings: saintly vs. sinful, the worldly vs. spiritual — so even the eulogy for a quasi-saintly Simon de Montfort, who died as a kind of martyr, is followed by quatrains deploring the carnal folly of those who desire pleasure and aspire to power. The perspective we seem asked to look from is that of Ecclesiastes, the preacher: ‘vanity of vanities, all is vanity’. Saints, gluttons, kings, political heroes, all are mortal and go into the pit, from which only the righteous can hope for redemption.

What, then, does the scribe do next? Having balanced the triumph and tragedy of mighty political opposites from seventy years ago (1264–65), he now brings us half-way on to 1341 (the date by which he had finished most of the manuscript) with a poem on the 1305 capture, execution, and quartering of the Scottish ‘rebel’ Sir William Wallace — one of those whom the poem describes as the ‘traytours’ of Scotland. By 1305 the English Prince Edward, scorned and mocked in the Middle English *sirventes* of 1264, has become the great and pious king who rightly punishes Scots rebels: ‘Sire Edward oure kyng, that ful is of piete, | the Waleis quarters sende to his oune countre | on foure half to honge, huere mirour to be, | theropon to thenche that monie myhten se | ant drede.’ The poet ends this 1305 poem with a warning to the French and the Scots, who are in alliance against England, that while King Edward Longshanks lives they had better beware: ‘Charles of Fraunce, so moni mon tolde, | With mihte & with streynthe hem helpe wolde, | his thonkes, | — tprot, Scot, for thi strif! | hang vp thyn hachet ant thi knyf, | whil him lasteth the lyf | with the longe shonkes.’

The Middle English poem *On the Follies of Fashion*, copied next by the scribe (fol. 61^v), has seemed to editors and critics completely unrelated: it is a fierce attack on the pride and greed of women as displayed in their clothing and hairdos and ornaments. Yet consider the verbal echoes from the last lines of the previous poem (against the Scots and French) within the first lines of this diatribe against proud women:²³

²³ Theo Stemmler (‘Miscellany or Anthology?’, p. 116) has previously cited this verbal linkage of ‘Simon Fraser’ and *Follies of Fashion*; see pp. 116–20 for other astute observations.

Sir Simon Fraser

tprot, Scot, for thi strif!

hang vp thyn hachet ant thy knyf,

whil him lasteth the lyf

with the longe shonkes!

On the Follies of Fashion

Lord that lenest vs lyf, | ant lokest vch an lede,

Forte cocke with knyfe | nast thou none nede,

bothe wepmon & wyf | sore mowe drede

lest thou be sturne with strif | for bone that thou bede

in wunne,

that monkune shulde shilde hem from sunne.

The one poem warns the Scots ‘rebels’ that hatchets and knives will get them nowhere; the other reminds all mortals that God needs no knives to punish sinful men and women. The second poem goes on to apply this general warning to women in particular: now Pride takes precedence everywhere (‘Nou hath prude the pris in euerche plawe’), but the poet speaks especially of ‘mony wymmon vnwis’, and his terms become increasingly vituperative as the poem proceeds, scorning ‘strumpets, shrews, gigelots’ who imitate the clothing styles and hairdos of noble women and saying they shall dwell with devils in hell. They sit, he says, ‘ase a slat swyn that hongeth is eren’ — like a stuck pig with its ears hanging down, the hairdo presumably being side-curls hanging like pigs’ ears. He adds that if such a woman lacks proper lye with which to bleach her hair, she will use ‘worse’ — presumably the urine obtained cheaply from urinals. The proud women, like the proud Scots, and perhaps like the proud rebel barons, have over-reached and been made fools by the powers of the world, the flesh, and the devil; they get their blonde beauty from a stinking jordan.

The two final poems in Quire 6 reinforce this message. The first, in French (*La lessoun a leals amantz*, fols 61^v–62^v), immediately follows the diatribe against women, while the second, in Middle English, *Middelerd for mon wes mad* (vol 62^v), completes Quire 6. The French poem tells us that many men are deceived who think to win friends by conquest and by wealth, and goes on to describe the rules of behaviour that win and keep true friends. The Middle English poem is a penitential lyric, elaborately crafted in alliterative stanzas, emphatically warning against carrying on the sweet but deadly secret love affairs that will, in the end, be exposed to human view, and are always known to God. Says the poet: ‘That I count a wretched game — begins in beauty, ends in shame’ (‘that I telle a poure play | that furst is feir, & setthe vnsete’). We are threatened, the poem tells us, by three mighty foes, the world, the flesh, and the devil, and if people are to be believed, the flesh — that is, women — can be the worst of these if they are unruly (‘yef we leueth eny leode, werryng is worst of wyue: wyues wille were ded wo, yef heo is wicked forte welde’), and for some people their worst enemy is their spouse (‘some beoth founden vnder felde that hath to fere is meste fo’). Yet his grim warning ends with a hopeful reminder. Let us not believe we are forsaken, he says:

we may be overthrown in the jousting, yet we shall arise before our Father, for though the foe has felled us, He was born to redeem us all, and when the last trump blows, He will bid us to be among his, and on his right hand be given a place among the righteous. So the sequence in this quire has reached its moving finale: though warning in detail against the world, the flesh, and the devil, it reminds us that those who live righteously will be redeemed and sit at the right hand of Jesus in heaven.

MAPPING POINTS WEST OF WEST MIDLANDS
MANUSCRIPTS AND TEXTS: IRISHNESS(ES)
AND MIDDLE ENGLISH LITERARY CULTURE

John J. Thompson

In book two, chapter one of his work entitled *The Itinerary through Wales* (*Itinerarium Cambriae*), a journey that took place in 1188 after the Norman conquest of Ireland, Gerald of Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis) tells how William Rufus, the second Norman king of England, had earlier dreamed of making meaningful contact with Ireland.¹ In 1097 William had penetrated far enough into Wales to catch just a glimpse of the Irish coast. He immediately declared he would collect a fleet together and use them to make a bridge. This monumental architecture, Gerald claims, was to have been constructed near St David's. But the rest, as they say, is history. Geographical reality and common sense eventually intervened. Despite obvious enthusiasm for the idea, the proposed landbridge between the two islands was never attempted, except perhaps in William's imagination. And as Gerald's version of more recent history also tells us at this point, the beginnings of an attempted English conquest of Ireland had to wait for another king, Henry II, and, of course, for another day.

This is an essay about the possibilities and difficulties of constructing a different kind of bridge between Britain and Ireland, one that can be built through linking manuscript and textual study and linguistic analysis to other forms of documentary evidence, and particularly through an investigation of the codicological challenges and opportunities offered by what is sometimes now called 'manuscript geography'. I am particularly interested in spanning a perceived gap that has grown up in recent criticism between what we understand of early

¹ *Gerald of Wales, The Journey Through Wales*, ed. by Betty Radice (London: Penguin, 1978).

fourteenth-century Anglophone literary culture in England and evidence for the same period of a developing Anglophone literary culture in Ireland. And I want to attempt this bridge-building exercise through the mapping of a complex of political and cultural activities where book production and Anglophone texts appear to have played a small and, one suspects, largely insignificant part. An alternative view to that taken in this essay would of course be that such materials may have once played a much more significant role as a cultural intervention in Anglo-Irish social and literary relations but that that role has now been almost entirely obliterated from our twenty-first-century view through the general failure of enough relevant manuscript, textual, and linguistic evidence to survive.

Whatever view one takes of this issue, the simple truth is that English dialects west of the West Midlands simply have not been mapped yet. And the reason for Ireland's virtual absence from such maps is not particularly difficult to explain.² It has to do with the paucity of textual evidence and the problems of localization in what little evidence remains. Unlike other Middle English dialect regions, for example, the English dialects in Ireland are not mapped linguistically or geographically on the dotmaps prepared by Angus McIntosh, M. L. Samuels, and Michael Benskin in the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* (*LALME*). Indeed, in terms of written linguistic remnants, the following six manuscripts are apparently all that is left to represent the Anglophone aspects of the early fourteenth-century Hiberno-English literary culture that are of particular interest in this essay.

1. London, British Library, MS Harley 913, a manuscript written in the early years of the fourteenth century, preserving predominantly Latin religious, parodic, and satirical items, with the Anglophone material that accompanies the Latin items betraying various ultimately unlocalizable Middle Hiberno-English dialect features of an early type. These are analysed in detail by Angus McIntosh and M. L. Samuels in their seminal 'Prolegomena to the Study of Medieval Anglo-Irish'.³

2. Cambridge University Library, MS Gg. 1. 1, a copy of the *Northern Passion* in an earlier fourteenth-century hand that preserves unlocalizable Middle

² Of course in some modern mapping exercises Ireland itself either does not exist or exists only as a vaguely glimpsed coastline. For an example of Irish absence when medieval English dialects west of the West Midlands are mapped in a standard modern linguistic account of English dialects, see Albert C. Baugh and Thomas Cable, *History of the English Language*, 5th edn (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 191.

³ Angus McIntosh and M. L. Samuels, 'Prolegomena to the Study of Medieval Anglo-Irish', *Medium Ævum*, 37 (1968), 1–11.

Hiberno-English dialect forms of the kind identified by Angus McIntosh and others.

3. London, British Library, MS Harley 3724, texts of the creed and pater-noster and another short religious lyric copied about 1300 in an unlocalizable dialect characterized by McIntosh and others as 'Middle Hiberno-English of an early type';⁴ this material accompanying the text of the *Topographia Hiberniae* by Gerald of Wales in the manuscript.

4. London, Lambeth Palace, MS 557, preserving scraps of verse in an unlocalizable Middle Hiberno-English of an early type copied in the same late thirteenth-century charter hand that also wrote in the manuscript the Latin memorandum recording a debt of bondage at Cashel, in Tipperary.

5. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 405, more lyric scraps written in a charter hand of about 1300 in a dialect that is not localizable by itself but preserves some recognizable southern English linguistic forms, in a manuscript that shows signs of original ownership by the brethren of St John of Jerusalem at Waterford.

6. Kilkenny, St Canice's Library, the Red Book of Ossory, preserving some Middle English lyric snatches that display no distinctive Middle Hiberno-English dialect forms but were written into the manuscript on the instigation of Richard de Ledrede, Bishop of Ossory from 1317.

And that is about all that remains of the linguistic and textual archive, although, arguably, one might also wish to admit as evidence other more tangentially related material, such as the text of the play called the *Pride of Life* in the now-destroyed account roll of the Priory of the Holy Trinity once held in the Public Record Office of Dublin.⁵ This item was once copied by two fifteenth-century Dublin scribes from an exemplar whose unlocalizable dialect apparently betrayed many of the 'Middle Hiberno-English features of an early type' that McIntosh and Samuels associate with the Harley 913 items.⁶

The manuscript evidence outlined above usefully draws attention to the challenge of mapping Irishness on the most westerly frontiers of fourteenth-century Anglophone literary culture. Such a mapping exercise is especially useful and relevant in a volume of this nature because it also encourages reconsideration of questions of 'Englishness' in some early fourteenth-century manuscripts and texts

⁴ *LALME*, I, 112.

⁵ *Account Roll of the Priory of the Holy Trinity Dublin, 1337–1346*, ed. by James Mills with introductions by J. F. Lydon and Alan J. Fletcher (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996).

⁶ McIntosh and Samuels, 'Prolegomena'; *LALME*, I, 112.

associated with the West Midlands. Despite obvious methodological difficulties inherent in the concept, the idea of mapping a literary culture remains a useful one. Whatever mapping can or cannot achieve, the term itself functions as a supple topographical analogy that can be used to emphasize mobility, transition, and exchange rather than fixedness — and these are all potentially crucial aspects of the early fourteenth-century cultural practices identified in this essay.

One would certainly want to begin an examination of such practices by questioning what ‘Englishness’ means in a late medieval context, particularly the forms of Englishness that prospered in difficult and border settings in the later Middle Ages. And the next question one might legitimately ask is, how might a difficult and border setting in the later Middle Ages itself be defined? Should such border settings be defined or mapped in geographical, social, political, linguistic, or literary terms, for example, or in some combination of all of these, or by taking other factors into account? Thorlac Turville-Petre’s work has made a start on raising the question of English national identity in some of these contexts, but it is fair to say that there remain plenty of other widely differing and often quite contradictory historical case studies still requiring attention at the micro level before literary historians can talk with any degree of confidence regarding the different types of ‘Englishness’ and late medieval national and local identities.⁷

Such questions regarding the origins and nature of national consciousness have always been around on the fringes of polite academic conversations among historians of one form or another. But the issue of exactly what constitutes ‘Irishness’ in the later Middle Ages also now represents an emerging and controversial topic in Middle English scholarship. In a spirit, one imagines, of devolutionary fairness, the Irish, Welsh, and Scottish are granted chapters of their own in David Wallace’s recent *Cambridge History of English Medieval Literature*. In the Irish case, this comes in the form of the chapter by Terence Dolan, entitled ‘Writing in Ireland’.⁸ It is useful that ‘Writing in Ireland’ has been allowed to become part of the Wallace volume of essays since it is, after all, a major survey of British literature in the British Isles. But in a number of important ways, the chapter on Ireland in the *Cambridge History* seems self-contained and perhaps even sealed off from the concerns of the rest of the book, with little apparent cross-fertilization or taking up of the motifs, themes, and preoccupations explored in other chapters.

⁷ Thorlac Turville-Petre, *England the Nation: Language, Literature, and National Identity, 1290–1340* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).

⁸ Terence Dolan, ‘Writing in Ireland’, in *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature*, ed. by David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 208–28.

Irish writing is treated as somehow different and apart from all of this. And the effect of this presumption on understanding where Middle Hiberno-English writings come from can be seen quite rapidly by glancing at the index to the *Cambridge History* where there is a distinct lack of cross-referencing between 'Writing in Ireland' and other chapters in the book.

Arising from all such general surveys of a national literature that include Ireland in its remit are a number of ideologically charged images around which modern cultural attitudes to pre-modern English-speaking Ireland have already clearly taken shape. Most of these will seem all too depressingly familiar to anyone who has watched the television news over the past thirty years: images of strongholds and besieged communities; communities that were quite literally either within or beyond the Pale; communities experiencing institutional injustice, discrimination, betrayal, abandonment, loss of communal identity, and confusion; communities where the norm seems to be violent and cruel deaths, the wanton destruction or theft of property, periods of lawlessness and social breakdown, military sorties and ambushes by an invading force, momentary peace treaties, temporary, often cynical political alliances, as well as attempts at strategic bridge building of one kind or another. In addition to seeing similar such events played out on television screens, medieval scholars have found examples of all the occurrences mentioned above in the tortured history of late medieval Ireland. The potency of such images of Irishness is so great that there is the ever-present danger of reading the Irish Middle Ages simply as the precursor of Irish modernity and not with any greater or more sophisticated sense of its possible alterity.

Elsewhere in modern English studies, a similar danger has been recognized: a common source of complaint among some modern commentators, for example, has been the enthusiasm with which certain English medievalists have embraced the opportunity to view their period reductively through sentimental Romantic and Victorian eyes. The Irish case may be somewhat different and more politically sensitive, so that, in contrast to the English case, it is practically impossible to find any published criticism of the tendency to view late medieval Ireland equally sentimentally, through the rather harsher lens of nineteenth- and twentieth-century nationalist rhetoric and ideology. It is worth stressing in this context that there is nothing wrong with having an Irish national political agenda per se, only that, in comparison to the sentimental English attachment to Romantic or Victorian values, it remains rather more difficult and challenging for scholarship of this kind to recognize and confront the distorting effect such an agenda can have on modern fantasies of the Irish Middle Ages. This is simply because such rhetoric can appear so contemporary and relevant in the light of recent commentaries on Irish history.

Moving on to another possible methodological approach for mapping 'Irishness' (or 'West Midlandsness' for that matter) much of this essay can be read as a response to Ralph Hanna's recent analytical survey of 'Middle English Manuscripts and the Study of Literature' for the journal *New Medieval Literatures*.⁹ Here Hanna calls for what he describes as a cultural move — the refounding of Middle English studies in regionally based surveys of medieval books in Britain that will offer a basis for larger histories, alert to the localized and dispersed properties of medieval manuscript culture.

In the theoretically informed hothouse environment of contemporary trans-Atlantic medieval studies, however, the kind of attention to manuscript study that Hanna in particular has advocated takes on a particular resonance, consonant with the new philological/new medieval desire to return to the entire cultural circumstances of medieval textuality. Here is how Stephen Nichols sets himself apart from modern forms of editing based on nineteenth-century quasi-scientific approaches by describing his attempts at recuperation of the past through the study of manuscripts as artefacts in their own right rather than as symbolic of something else:

I want to consider the medieval artifact itself, the manuscript as an historical document whose materiality constitutes precisely what the ideal text cannot be — [...] a medieval event.¹⁰

The medieval manuscript event offers itself as an opportunity for codicologically minded cultural materialists to participate in a de-layering exercise, one that is intended to reveal the substrata that make up the physical and textual remains of a single medieval book and assess their significance. By extension, such scholarship may indeed make Ralph Hanna's cultural move, by uncovering in cross-section an entire cultural process, including the activities that surrounded the production of books and the transmission and reception of texts. Undertaking such a codicological investigation is therefore not unlike the metaphorical experience of an archaeological dig but it is worth adding a caveat here: just as there are different kinds of archaeological digs, so too there are different kinds of manuscript events that enable us to articulate different and often contradictory discourses of the past, some of them discourses that we cannot fully explain or understand or

⁹ Ralph Hanna, 'Analytical Survey 4: Middle English Manuscripts and the Study of Literature', in *New Medieval Literatures*, vol. IV, ed. by Wendy Scase, Rita Copeland, and David Lawton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 243–64.

¹⁰ Stephen Nichols, 'Philology and its Discontents', in *The Future of the Middle Ages*, ed. by William D. Paden (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994), pp. 113–41.

contextualize as part of a larger picture.¹¹ For some other postmodern commentators, however, there can probably now be no such thing as a single objective medieval event in either codicology, or archaeology, or anything else for that matter. In describing an event, one simply reveals one's own relationship to the past, and to the present in which we operate, and about ourselves as subjects in the present. In other words, our desire to recuperate the past is produced from within our own subjective predicament. Perhaps it is as well to recognize this before commencing the search for 'hard' manuscript evidence to support the case for mapping early fourteenth-century Anglophone literary culture in Ireland.

In order to demonstrate that such a mapping exercise might be possible, it is important to move from a survey of the very few extant early fourteenth-century Irish manuscript remnants that seem relevant to this discussion to examine other scraps of material found in a pair of roughly contemporary manuscripts and texts from the West Midlands. It is also necessary to draw attention to some rather more tangentially related documentary evidence from the same period that suggests the activities of certain early fourteenth-century magnate families and their communities associated with both the West Midlands and Ireland. Such documentary evidence buttresses the rather frail codicological evidence outlined earlier that has hitherto prevented rather than facilitated the linguistic mapping of late medieval Anglophone Ireland. The data suggesting the travels and activities of certain real people as they moved between the West Midlands and Ireland is the most important evidence one can now find at the present moment to support the main argument of this essay. Put in a nutshell, my point is that there was a strong and enduring West Midlands interest and investment in Ireland and Irish affairs at precisely the time when Harley 913 was being produced. Harley 913 is the jewel in the crown of this discussion since it is a key literary manuscript, one that has profoundly shaped modern critical accounts of early fourteenth-century Anglophone literary culture in Ireland.¹²

¹¹ Here is where I part company with the New Historicist insistence on reading artefacts as discourses of power since it has become almost a truism to say that the New Historicist temptation is always to totalize the experience of such an event and to see it as somehow naturally representative of an entire culture or cultural moment, one that modern commentators with the right attitude can place themselves in an appropriately transcendent position to read.

¹² Recent descriptions of the manuscript include Michael Benskin, 'The Hands of the Kildare Poems' Manuscript', *Irish University Review*, 20 (1990), 163–93; Angela M. Lucas and Peter J. Lucas, 'Reconstructing a Disarranged Manuscript: The Case of MS Harley 913, a Medieval Hiberno-English Miscellany', *Scriptorium*, 44 (1990), 286–99.

The last part of this essay will attempt to map Harley 913 as a single medieval manuscript event rather differently than has hitherto been attempted. By briefly returning to this manuscript event, and the nature of its particular brand of Irishness, some of the challenges offered by seeking to define the localities that sustained literary communities in the later Middle Ages can be very clearly highlighted. Previous published accounts of the manuscript illustrate many of those totalizing tendencies alluded to above. In the case of Harley 913, there is a temptation that has proved irresistible in all recent published scholarship to define its local community in terms of ethnicity — it is an Irish book for an Anglophone-Irish audience — and to see such a community as more or less geographically, socially, politically, temporally, and linguistically grounded and circumscribed.¹³ As such, it somehow becomes legitimate to confuse the original writing of some of the Anglophone, Latin, Irish, and Franciscan texts Harley 913 contains with the origins of the manuscript itself, to argue that the circumstances in which the items were originally written coincides with the production (and earliest reading) of the manuscript items. Following on from that likely misapprehension, the search is on to find out which Irish town or district Harley 913 originally came from and the identity of its original compiler. Once methodological defences are down in this manner, the search rapidly becomes a tantalizing riddle, especially when one realizes that a number of different Irish places and historically identifiable people are named in the Harley 913 items, together, perhaps, with the names of several later possible Anglophone-Irish owners.

It has also been seen as imperative to ask whether Harley 913 belongs in an institutional or a non-institutional context — is it or is it not a Franciscan book? Has it been compiled according to a Franciscan preaching template? The manuscript certainly contains very many texts of Franciscan provenance, so is it a friar's miscellany? Or is it some more personal *vade mecum* (which probably would have belonged to a preacher, we are assured by nearly every commentator, since it contains so much of the raw material we associate with medieval preaching)? And just

¹³ This is basically the approach taken in the recent summary account of the literary-historical significance of the manuscript and its contents in *Anglo-Irish Poems of the Middle Ages*, ed. by Angela M. Lucas (Blackrock: Columba Press, 1995). The criticism can be extended to include the recent essay on the manuscript by Neil Cartlidge, which is fundamentally a formalist reading of the Harley 913 items, in which he tilts nicely at previous attempts to contextualize the manuscript through a fairly simplistic and ultimately reductive historical reading of its possible Irish and Franciscan context: Neil Cartlidge, 'Festivity, Order, and Community in Fourteenth-Century Ireland: The Composition and Contexts of BL MS Harley 913', *Yearbook of English Studies*, 33 (2003), 33–52.

how well has or has not the collection been organized? Is it an anthology or miscellany? Or is it the work of a compiler interested in satire and parody, festivity, ideas of order and community? Or does Harley 913 reflect the personality of some Irish Anglophone owner with a liking for items that indulge in word-play? Or is it the work of someone with a taste for vernacular writings dealing with localizable Irish events, or for whimsy and historical fantasy in three languages, sometimes treated satirically or parodically?

The contents of the manuscript sustain all these views and feed them back to the book's modern commentators. Its items give modern readers plenty of possibilities for mapping this book as some kind of direct cultural intervention in Irish history, through providing them with images of municipal strongholds and besieged communities of the kind familiar in the media. Such approaches reflect our modern preoccupation with the idea of the unchanging and apparently timeless confrontational patterns of Irish history. The haste to understand the Irishness of the Harley 913 'manuscript event' becomes a rush to contextualize, politicize, and ultimately fetishize the manuscript in fairly simplistic ways. Such an approach has proved almost completely irresistible in this case largely because of the huge absences of external information in the Irish administrative and archival documentary record that might be linked, at the micro level, to the circumstances of the book's production. Such an absence is then combined with an almost fatal dose of a sentimental post-Romantic and post-Victorian inclination to seek rounded genius personalities behind texts and books, and suitable occasions for the acts of compiling and reading them, or having them read to others. As such, in the case of Harley 913, there has been a collapse of the distinction between the points of creative origin for the individual Anglophone items now in the manuscript, and the circumstances in which these texts were later transmitted and copied when the manuscript was produced. In sum, Harley 913 represents a manuscript event that most modern commentators would dearly like to place within the Pale, that old faithful last resort of scholars wishing to isolate the Anglophone population in Ireland as a besieged and inward-looking isolated community.

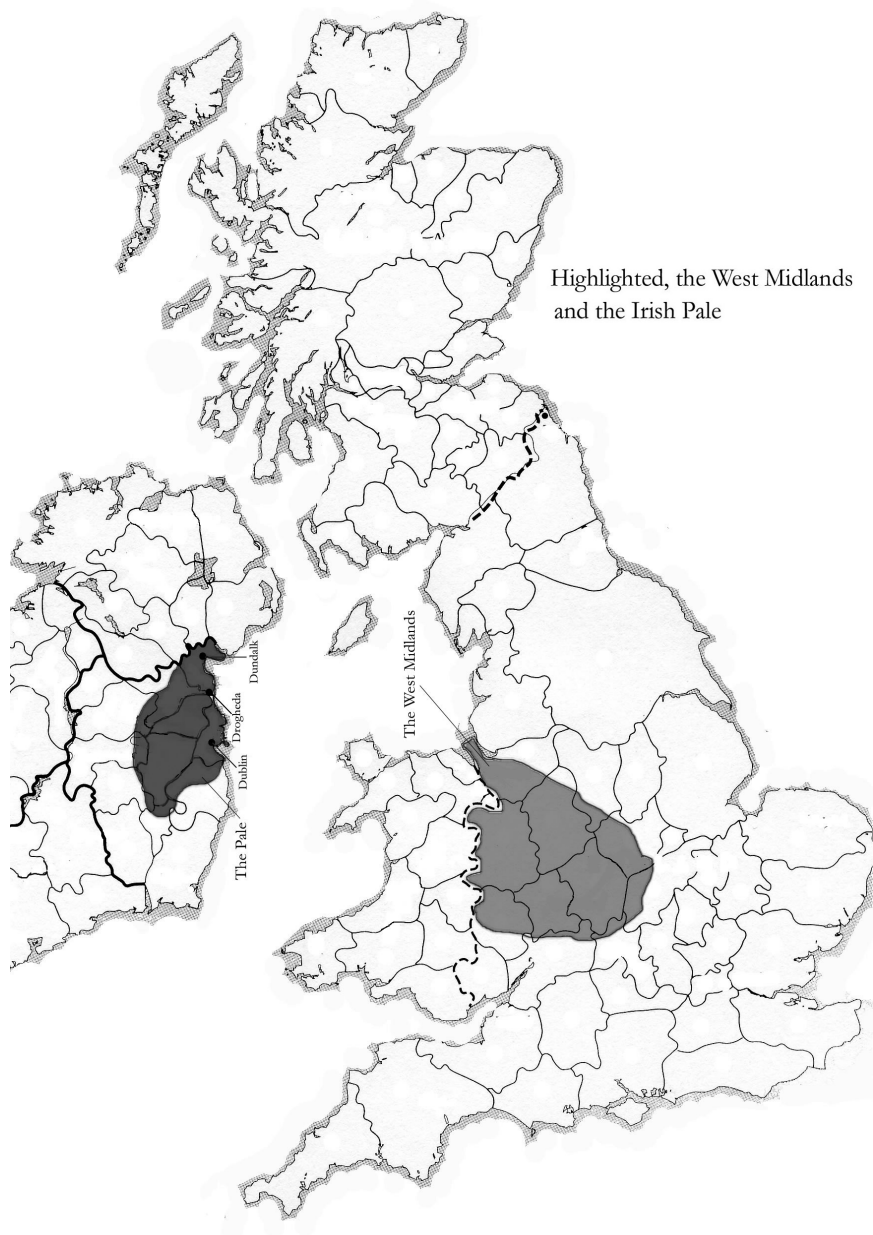
But the book clearly deserves to remain beyond the Pale, both metaphorically and also quite literally since the Pale itself did not officially exist until 1466, when it was legislated into existence, and even the earliest mention of it dates to 1446–47, more than one hundred years after the likely date of composition of Harley 913.¹⁴ The event called Harley 913 also happened some thirty years or

¹⁴ For the Pale and its geographical relation to medieval Britain and Ireland, see map (p. 123).

more before the notorious Statute of Kilkenny (1366), popularly seen with the rosy glow of hindsight as another of those attempts by the English conqueror to legislate cultural identity through confrontation with the native Irish. But, as Robin Frame has forcefully and sensibly argued, this is a myopic historical view, one that fails to take due account of the enormous complexities of the early to mid-fourteenth-century post-colonial situation in Ireland. Frame argues that the Kilkenny Statute has been chiefly seen by modern commentators as a sound bite from Irish history about the English occupation of Ireland, without mention of either the clause in the Statute dealing with feuding between different generations of the English immigrant community in Ireland and their resistance to centralized English authority, or the generally poor relations between the English born in England and now living in Ireland, and those Anglophone speakers born in Ireland who were determined to hold on to what they had already gained.¹⁵ Nor has much interest been shown in the manner in which the Statute attempted to sum up the peacekeeping legislation of the preceding seventy years that attempted to keep these real people from wiping each other out. Instead, the legislation has simply been made notorious for its attempt to legislate the Englishness of the Anglo-Irish by excluding the Gaelic influence that also seemed to threaten it. Ironically, of course, to view Irish and English cultures in fourteenth-century Ireland as unproblematically separate and confrontational — as nearly all previous commentators on the Harley 913 manuscript have done at one time or other — is ultimately the work of an imperial agenda and ideology. Such an ideology has its own vested interests in preserving binary oppositions and failing to appreciate fully the many different fragments that once made up a hugely complicated picture of medieval colonial relationships in both Britain and Ireland.

It is important to return to the manuscript with these problems in mind. Harley 913 is a handmade early fourteenth-century artefact, a palm-sized volume that was at least partly assembled in units modern codicologists now like to describe as booklets (although the precise meaning of the term can vary from manuscript to manuscript, depending on the production circumstances). The volume has suffered a fair bit of disarrangement and wear and tear from its moment of origin through to the relatively recent present. Its texts also seem to have been assembled gradually and incrementally into a trilingual collection where the majority of items are written in Latin, although there has been a disproportionate amount of attention paid to the much smaller number and volume of texts

¹⁵ Robin Frame, *Colonial Ireland 1169–1369* (Dublin: Helicon, 1981), p. 132.



Highlighted, the West Midlands
and the Irish Pale

The West Midlands

The Pale
Dublin
Drogheda
Dundalk

Late medieval Britain and Ireland.

written in Middle English.¹⁶ This material is linked to Ireland through the known early provenance of Harley 913 and the motifs and themes of much of its contents; possibly also through the dialect of its main copyist, as far as that has been ascertained; because of a few later identifiable Irish names added in the margins; and finally from our rather detailed knowledge of how it was later used by early Irish historiographers, including in 1608, Sir James Ware, senior (d. 1632). One should also stress the polyglot, peripatetic, inherently changeable and unstable, and ultimately unknowable nature of the sociolinguistic and political loyalties of the local community or communities in which this book was created and read. Despite a century or so of efforts to the contrary, it is surely now time to accept that we are simply not going to discover a particular Irish place that the original compiler of this book, or the book's earliest readers, might have originally called home.

So, faced with the impasse outlined above, what is the best way forward in our search to map the Anglophone nature of the Harley 913 manuscript event? The question can certainly be complicated just a little further by taking a brief look at some Harley 913 items that seem closely related textually and temporally to texts surviving in other manuscripts, as part of other manuscript events that initially seem widely dispersed geographically and dialectally, but which are not, perhaps, quite so widely dispersed as we have hitherto allowed ourselves to imagine. The nineteenth-century German scholar Wilhelm Heuser has characterized such items as 'poems which depend on foreign models in a different dialect' ('Gedichte welche nachweisbar auf fremden Vorlagen von abweichendem Dialekte beruhen').¹⁷ One is therefore tempted to ask what kind of evidence the other surviving copies that enable Heuser to make this claim provide for the localized and dispersed properties of medieval manuscript culture that Ralph Hanna has invited scholars to investigate as part of his cultural move.

The texts in question are just two in number, one written in Latin and the other in Middle English. The first of these is the Latin complaint poem dubbed 'On the venality of Judges' by its nineteenth-century editors, another text of

¹⁶ For a reasonably comprehensive study of the Latin items in Harley 913, see Deborah Hatfield-Moore, 'Paying the Minstrel: A Cultural Study of B.L. Harley 913' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Queen's University, Belfast, 2001).

¹⁷ *Die Kildare-Gedichte: Die Ältesten Mitttelenglischen Denkmäler in Anglo-Irischen Überlieferung*, ed. by Wilhelm Heuser (Bonn: P. Hanstein, 1904; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1965), p. 167.

which is extant in BL, MS Royal 12. C. XII.¹⁸ The Royal 12. C. XII manuscript was produced collaboratively and includes the work of a copyist active in the south West Midlands area of the Welsh Marches, who is rather better known as the main scribe-compiler of BL, MS Harley 2253, the copyist of the famous Harley lyrics. It is this copyist who is responsible for transcribing the Royal 12. C. XII text of 'On the venality of Judges'.¹⁹

The second item in question is the Middle English poem called 'Earth upon Earth', a poem that was frequently reworked and recopied throughout the later Middle Ages. The earliest surviving version is dubbed the A version by its modern editor, with the only two surviving A-text examples being the Harley 913 copy and the text copied at about the same time for Harley 2253 by the Harley 2253 scribe.²⁰ So, both of these Harley 913 items can be simultaneously classified as 'foreign' by Heuser, or, more accurately perhaps, as English West Midlands survivals, because of the survival of these other roughly contemporary copies produced by the Harley 2253 copyist.

This minor detail is of considerably larger significance when it is remembered that the Middle Hiberno-English dialect is itself such a complex hybrid.²¹ Intriguingly, the pioneering dialectological work on Middle Hiberno-English by Angus McIntosh, M. L. Samuels, and Michael Benskin has demonstrated the underlying linguistic similarities between the dialects of English in fourteenth-century Ireland, particularly in the Harley 913 texts, and the dialect features of the south West Midlands of England, including the datable and localizable Middle English work of the Harley 2253 scribe. This sense of connectedness between manuscripts and texts that can be associated with Anglophone medieval Ireland and the south West Midlands is a pattern that is also repeated in a number of fifteenth-century survivals.

It has long been realized that Harley 2253 and, by implication, Royal 12. C. XXII can both be associated with documentary records associated with the activities and business interests of the powerful baronial family of Mortimer of

¹⁸ *Political Songs of England*, ed. by Thomas Wright (London: Camden Society, 1839), pp. 224–30.

¹⁹ For the scribe's varied career profile, see Carter Revard, 'Scribe and Provenance', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript: The Scribes, Contents, and Social Contexts of British Library MS Harley 2253*, ed. by Susanna Fein (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), pp. 21–109.

²⁰ *The Middle English Poem, Erthe upon Erthe, printed from Twenty-Four Manuscripts*, ed. by Hilda M. R. Murray, EETS, o.s., 141 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1911), pp. 1–4.

²¹ McIntosh and Samuels, 'Prolegomena'.

Wigmore. After 1308 the Mortimers held the castle and half the town of Ludlow, along with Irish lands at Trim, Co. Meath. Indeed, as is well known, preserved in Harley 2253 is a binding fragment from account rolls of a Mortimer household in Ardmulghan, Co. Meath.²² Quite what this association is likely to have meant is still not entirely clear, but Carter Revard's latest research has at least demonstrated the frequent traffic between Ludlow and Ireland, and the likely increasing volume of that traffic in the early fourteenth century among members of the Mortimer household and their retainers. In addition we have evidence of the frequent crossings of the Irish Sea made by other Ludlow-area magnates such as the de Verduns, and the Bykenores and their retainers, who included a number of identifiable Ludlow merchants, burgesses, chaplains, and tenants from their English lands brought over and settled on their Irish estates.

The fortunes of the main trunk of the de Verdun family line are particularly interesting in this respect.²³ This powerful family held the other half of Ludlow and had alternate presentation with the Mortimers to the local parish church. At the same time, from the late twelfth century, the fortunes of the de Verdun family in Ireland seem to have been consistently interwoven with those of the Mortimers and other local West Midlands families in a variety of complex and interesting ways. The de Verduns held the lordship of Dundalk in Co. Louth, and successive generations engaged in a complicated series of military campaigns and political manoeuvrings to maintain and extend their English and Irish holdings, often defending their liberties against the king's ministers, sometimes in cooperation with other landed marcher families, such as the Mortimers, and sometimes at the expense of the Mortimers, as local political allegiances and family circumstances fluctuated.

Historical research on the de Verduns is now well advanced and such work is intriguing because of the geographical spread of the landed estates belonging to individual members of the family. The spread of the de Verdun family estates across England and Ireland before 1316 (when the main line of the family died out) was quite extraordinary. Interest in tracking the fortunes of the main family line in a culturally specific manner exemplifies a fairly recent trend in medieval

²² See N. R. Ker, intro., *Facsimile of British Museum MS. Harley 2253*, EETS, o.s., 255 (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), p. xxii; David L. Jeffrey, 'Authors, Anthologists, and Franciscan Spirituality', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript*, ed. by Fein, pp. 261–70 (pp. 268–70).

²³ Mark S. Hagger, *The Fortunes of a Norman Family: The de Verduns in England Ireland and Wales, 1066–1316* (Dublin: Four Courts, 2001).

historical scholarship — by scholars such as Robert Bartlett, David Crouch, R. R. Davies, and Robin Frame.²⁴ That trend is to move beyond the traditional concern of English political historians with the story of the evolution of a central administration and an English state with an increasingly strong metropolitan base. Instead the focus has shifted to the activities of the aristocracies and their households who lived and moved across national frontiers and bureaucratic systems of government and other boundaries carved out by politics and war. Such studies reveal that thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century family fortunes were made and secured, or lost, by events and individuals operating on both sides of the Irish Sea, and by the families in question making, or failing to make, the necessarily complicated arrangements for inheritance and marriage and the proper management of widely dispersed households and estates.

The recent exhaustive study of archival and printed sources associated with the de Verduns, by Mark S. Hagger, offers some sense of what all this means with regard to the complexity of familial identity and loyalties in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries: here we have, in the de Verdun case, ‘an early fourteenth-century Staffordshire family possessed of a toponym proclaiming their Norman origins, who were simultaneously marcher lords, and yet, as the documentary archive clearly shows, the same individuals were also perceived on both sides of the Irish Sea as members of an Irish family’.²⁵ Even after the de Verdun name and magnate family influence died away, the partition of their lands indicates that individual female family members were destined to maintain their multiple local identities in both the West Midlands and Ireland, presumably dragging along behind them, in the wake of their ambition and activities, a number of English-speaking retainers of various kinds who also enjoyed (if that is the right term) careers spent on one or other, or sometimes both, sides of the Irish Sea.

The problem is, obviously, that we do not know how many, if any, of these de Verdun retainers were Franciscan poets, itinerant preachers, trilingual secretaries, scribes or, indeed, avid readers of English language texts, or keen and educated men and women interested in Latin and vernacular parody and satire. On the other hand, we do know about the processes of subinfeudation, motte construction, and manorialization in the last half of the thirteenth and first half of the fourteenth centuries in the counties of Louth, Meath, Dublin, and Kildare — the

²⁴ See, for example, R. R. Davies, ‘Frontier Arrangements in Fragmented Societies: Ireland and Wales’, in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. by Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 77–100; Frame, *Colonial Ireland*.

²⁵ Hagger, *Fortunes of a Norman Family*, p. 234.

area termed 'the four obedient shires' that eventually formed the Pale. And we know that these colonizing processes depended on the transplantation to Ireland of many English settlers from areas of Mortimer and de Verdun influence. Such transplantation and settlement continued apace throughout the twelfth century and right into the period when the items collected in Harley 913 were first composed and then later gathered together to form the manuscript collection that survives today. It also hardly needs to be said that scattered across English-speaking Ireland at this time must have been a good number of different generations of English-speaking de Verdun and Mortimer family retainers, bureaucrats, soldiers, tenants, and peasant farmers, many of whom had grown up in the West Midlands dialect area that Angus McIntosh and others have found to be so important in the context of identifying and mapping Middle Hiberno-English in its earliest written dialect forms.

So, determining exactly what constitutes 'Irishness' or a Middle Hiberno-English text in the early years of the fourteenth century is a complicated business, and we cannot simply confine our search for Irishness, or indeed West Midlands influence, or even 'Englishness' to events that took place on just one side of the Irish Sea. And by events, in this immediate context, is meant both political and social activities in the old historical sense of the word and also manuscripts and texts as artefacts in the new cultural materialist sense. For the moment it would be a brave person, indeed, who would follow Wilhelm Heuser in describing either the Latin complaint poem dubbed 'On the venality of Judges' or the A-version of the Middle English poem entitled 'Earth upon Earth' as non-Irish poems which depend on 'foreign models of a different dialect'. In some important respects we might instead better describe the extant copies of these two texts as both 'English' and also 'Irish' works, reworked and copied on one or other or both sides of the Irish Sea; they are also products of polyglot, peripatetic, inherently changeable and unstable Irish and West Midlands marcher communities. It was possibly both within and across such early fourteenth-century frontier communities that the manuscript events called Harley 913, Harley 2253, and Royal 12. C. XII, and presumably many others, were themselves once hosted.

Part Three
The Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries and Beyond

THE CLOPTON MANUSCRIPT
AND THE BEAUCHAMP AFFINITY:
PATRONAGE AND RECEPTION ISSUES
IN A WEST MIDLANDS READING COMMUNITY

Ryan Perry

Maintaining the vast estates of Richard Beauchamp (1382–1439), the supremely wealthy Earl of Warwick, was a corporate exercise of considerable complexity. Mainly concentrated in Worcestershire, Warwickshire, and Gloucestershire, but stretching inexorably east through Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire into the Home Counties and northwards into Staffordshire and Leicestershire, his lands carpeted the English Midlands. Such massive holdings involved a legion of gentry officials, variously responsible for such tasks as managing Beauchamp's estates and protecting his legal interests. It is the configuration of the administrative matrices surrounding Beauchamp which has occupied historians such as C. D. Ross, J. T. Driver, and more recently, Christine Carpenter.¹ In order to retain a measure of control in the district courts and thus

The following research is adapted from a chapter in my doctoral thesis, R. M. M. Perry, 'The Cultural Locations of *Handlyng Synne*' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Queen's University, Belfast, 2005).

¹ Historical treatments of the 'Beauchamp affinity' including discussion and biographical information of some of the key protagonists in the Warwick association can be found in several key studies. These include Christine Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society 1401–1499* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), and 'The Beauchamp Affinity: A Study of Bastard Feudalism at Work', *English Historical Review*, 95 (1980), 514–32; Charles Ross, *Estates and Finances of Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956), and 'The Household Accounts of Elizabeth Berkeley, Countess

protect his interests at a local level in areas where his estates lay, Beauchamp nurtured a labyrinthine set of connections with local lords and, perhaps more significantly, with the minor gentry who staffed the bureaucratic machinery of regional power.² Historians have tagged this huge and motley powerbase of gentry confederates the *Beauchamp affinity*. However, historians of the Beauchamp affinity have paid scant regard to the ways in which this political and economic matrix may have also sponsored a cultural network, where particular forms of literary and artistic practice may have developed in relation to the noble household. The following discussion is an attempt to analyse the significance of a single strand in this particular complex of socio-literary interrelationships. What can a single production, the Clopton manuscript, tell us about the networks of textual dissemination in the later medieval West Midlands and the ability of literary consumers to locate textual exemplars?

R. G. K. A. Mertes has argued that aristocratic households may have fostered their own unique 'patterns of piety'. According to the model suggested by Mertes, particular modes of pious behaviour would be performed by the 'servants [...] and followers' of a noble household, developing idiosyncratic models of religious practice and functioning, according to Mertes's formulation, as a discrete 'religious community'.³ If conventions of religious observance may have been adopted by members of the gentry who simulated the practices enacted within the noble household, then it is equally possible that other cultural mores, in particular, literary tastes and an appreciation of the significance of books as material artefacts, may similarly have been fostered within the Beauchamp affinity. Indeed, when locating patterns of pious observance and mapping the cultural utility of books in

of Warwick, 1420–1', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 50 (1951), 81–105. The following studies by J. T. Driver are also extremely useful: 'The Knights of the Shire for Worcestershire During the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V', *Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society*, n.s., 50 (1963), 42–64; 'Worcestershire Knights of the Shire 1377–1421', *Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society*, 3rd series, 4 (1974), 19–34; and 'Worcestershire Knights of the Shire', *Transactions of the Worcestershire Archaeological Society*, 3rd series, 5 (1976), 7–22.

² For discussion of local legal bureaucracy and how the Warwick bias was exploited by Richard Beauchamp, see Carpenter, 'Beauchamp Affinity', pp. 524–30. For a detailed discussion of the duties of fifteenth-century JPs, see J. R. Lander, *English Justices of the Peace, 1461–1509* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1989), pp. 79–107.

³ See R. G. K. A. Mertes, 'The Household as a Religious Community', in *People, Politics and Community in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. by Joel Rosenthal and Colin Richmond (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1987), pp. 123–39 (pp. 129, 123).

the noble household, it is clear that these are not exclusive social practices. Whether through sponsoring the copying or composition of religious texts or actually utilizing such works, through reading or listening to them, the spheres of textual and pious culture are frequently merged. As I will suggest in my closing arguments, books might even be regarded as holding value as ritualistic totems within religious observances.

The material evidence for books linked to the Earl of Warwick is limited, but there can be little doubt that the Beauchamp household was once a nexus for both literary composition and book production. The Earl's first wife, Elizabeth Berkeley, commissioned the writing of an English versified *Consolation of Philosophy*, an amalgam of a translation from a Latin *Consolatio* and the versification of Chaucer's *Boece*.⁴ Elizabeth was the daughter of Sir Thomas Berkeley, a renowned bibliophile and champion of writing in English, and Hanna has argued that Thomas's 'particular enthusiasm' for vernacular literature may have been transmitted through Elizabeth into the Beauchamp household.⁵ Such a view gains support from the survival of several manuscripts identified as having belonged to the Earl of Warwick, such as BL, MS Additional 24194, a copy of Trevisa's *Polychronicon* apparently copied in London by the 'delta scribe'.⁶ Unsurprisingly, this text had originally been sponsored by Beauchamp's father-in-law, Sir Thomas Berkeley. The Warwick household has also been connected both to the acquisition of books and the patronage of new works following Elizabeth Berkeley's death in 1422 and the remarriage of Beauchamp to Isabella Despenser in the subsequent year. Some of John Lydgate's prodigious literary output can be related to Warwick patronage following the union of Beauchamp and Isabella Despenser.

⁴ See Ralph Hanna, 'Sir Thomas Berkeley and his Patronage', *Speculum*, 64 (1989), 878–916 (pp. 899–902); Margaret Connolly, *John Shirley: Book Production and the Noble Household in Fifteenth-Century England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p. 15, pp. 34–35, p. 115.

⁵ Hanna, 'Sir Thomas Berkeley', p. 899.

⁶ For discussion of the 'Beauchamp books', see Connolly, *John Shirley*, pp. 114–15. Hanna has also connected with Richard Beauchamp Bodleian, MS Digby 233, a manuscript originally made for Berkeley containing two Trevisa translations ('Sir Thomas Berkeley', p. 897). However, this assertion has been subject to speculation; Connolly sees it as being likely, *John Shirley*, p. 115, whilst Kathleen Scott is more doubtful: *Later Gothic Manuscripts 1390–1490*, 2 vols (London: Harvey Miller, 1996), II, 123–25. For the 'delta scribe', see A. I. Doyle and M. B. Parkes, 'The Production of Copies of the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Confessio Amantis* in the Early Fifteenth Century', in *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries: Essays Presented to N. R. Ker*, ed. by M. B. Parkes and Andrew G. Watson (London: Scholar Press, 1978), pp. 163–210 (pp. 206–08). For a description of BL Add. 24194, see Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 82–83.

In 1426 Beauchamp commissioned Lydgate to translate a propagandist work, *The Title and Pedigree of Henry VI*, which celebrated the young King's rights to the French throne. And 'The Fifteen Joys of Our Lady' was written 'at p[re]stance of þe worshipfull Pryncesse Isabelle nowe Countasse of Warr lady Despenser', if we are to trust John Shirley's rubric which prefaces the text in BL, Cotton MS Titus A. XXVI.⁷

If members of the noble *familia* of the Warwick household were implicated in literary patronage and the sponsorship of book production, it is also apparent that lesser figures in the Warwick network were involved in the production and transmission of literary works, emulating the cultural mores of the upper tier of the Beauchamp household. Margaret Connolly's research into the early scribal activity of John Shirley demonstrates how the Earl of Warwick's affiliates could access and, certainly in Shirley's case, transcribe texts in manuscripts belonging to the Beauchamp household.⁸ Perhaps particularly important in this respect is BL, MS Additional 16165, a manuscript containing several booklets which Shirley transcribed in piecemeal fashion in the 1420s. These are the earliest remnants of Shirley's writings, produced in a decade when he continued to be engaged in clerical occupations for the Earl.⁹ Shirley's early copying activities appear to indicate that an enthusiasm for vernacular literature was penetrating the gentry circle connected with the house of Warwick. It seems unlikely, as has previously been argued, that his early transcriptions should be understood as scribal service performed for his noble employers, 'volunteerism [...] superadded to Shirley's normal employment'.¹⁰

⁷ Connolly, *John Shirley*, p. 177.

⁸ Other than the more recent research by Margaret Connolly, studies on John Shirley which have informed the following discussion include A. I. Doyle, 'More Light on John Shirley', *Medium Ævum*, 30 (1961), 93–101; A. S. G. Edwards, 'John Shirley and the Emulation of Courtly Culture', in *The Court and Cultural Diversity*, ed. by Evelyn Mullaly and John J. Thompson (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), pp. 309–17; Ralph Hanna, 'John Shirley and British Library MS. Additional 16165', *Studies in Bibliography*, 49 (1996), 95–105.

⁹ It is generally agreed that the bulk of the four distinct booklets which make up BL Add. 16165 were copied early to mid-1420s, with some parts as late as 1427–29, and other sections perhaps initiated in the first and second decades of the fifteenth century. For dating the booklets, see Hanna, 'John Shirley', pp. 98–101; Connolly, *John Shirley*, pp. 29–33; both cite material on watermarks in R. J. Lyall, 'Materials: The Paper Revolution', in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375–1475*, ed. by Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 11–29.

¹⁰ Hanna, 'John Shirley', p. 103.

Shirley's verse preface to BL Add. 16165 provides the most cogent explanation for how he imagined his texts might relate to an audience:

Thankeþe [...] þe wryter for his distresse,
 Whiche besечиþe your gentylnesse
 Pat ye sende þis booke ageyne
 Hoome to Shirley þat is right feyne,
 If it haþe beon to yowe pleasaunce
 As in þe reedyng of þe romaunce.¹¹

Shirley's verse clearly suggests that he imagined his work circulating amongst a coterie of individual readers who would return the work to him after reading. Indeed, as the writing of this preface postdates the construction of the booklets within the manuscript, it is possible that the once separate components of the manuscript had previously moved through this coterie before the gathering of the segments of writing into the form we see today. It seems implausible that this milieu included the upper tier of the Beauchamp household, who in all probability could have accessed the texts contained in BL Add. 16165 through their own exquisitely made copies. Therefore, the most likely cultural setting for the circulation of the early material transcribed by Shirley must be a coterie of his closest peers, those estate officials and members of gentry families of a similar status to the copyist, whose overlapping occupations in support of the Warwick household would have engendered similar cultural tastes.¹² Of course there might be said to be a nuanced cultural difference between the communal sharing of literary texts and accumulating a collection of books or, indeed, the commissioning of an exclusive codex. If Shirley's activities record an appetite for literature, a related inclination may have also been fostered in this West Midlands reading network. To understand this 'related inclination' it must be realized that for medieval book owners, the text contained in a codex was not necessarily the only artful aspect of the production. The sumptuous material construction of the book might single

¹¹ Quotations drawn from Hanna, 'John Shirley', p. 103. Similar verses may have originally prefaced another Shirley 'anthology', Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R. 3. 20, and both this manuscript and an additional Shirley production, Bodleian, MS Ashmole 59, contain the 'book-plate stanza', a piece of verse which correspondingly suggests the possibility of loaning; see Connolly, *John Shirley*, pp. 192–93.

¹² Connolly suggests this possibility in the concluding pages of her study whilst continuing to argue for an aristocratic coterie for Shirley's productions: 'It seems that his books had an appeal not just to members of Beauchamp's family and their relations and friends, but also to those who served the Beauchamps, including members of gentry families' (*John Shirley*, p. 194).

it out as a significant *objet d'art*, whether or not the owner regularly read its textual contents. What was the purpose of those ubiquitous, de luxe copies of the Book of Hours, possessed by many noble families who possibly could not have comprehended the Latin text? Did the text and physical codex imaginatively fuse into a kind of socio-spiritual totem, a magnificent symbol of both piety and social status? The insights of the anthropologist Alfred Gell regarding the production and collection of art objects have pertinence here: books may have taken on a cultural utility as emblems of rank, objects that expressed something of the owner's aspirations, material symbols of a particular and often celebratory sense of selfhood.¹³ Following the suggestions of Gell, it might not be enough to regard commissioned books as mere repositories for texts. Rather, they may also be considered as material objects which have come into being through, and indeed in some degree constitute the agency of, the commissioner, a notion I will return to at the close of this essay.¹⁴

The Clopton Manuscript

The manuscript known to modern scholarship as the 'Clopton manuscript' now survives in dismembered form as three separate manuscripts: Washington, D. C., Folger Library, MS V.b.236, Princeton University Library, R. H. Taylor MS 10, and London, University of London, Senate House Library, MS Sterling V. 17.¹⁵

¹³ Gell talks about works of art, for him an elastic term referring to any cultural production which motivates 'abductive inferences' (value judgments) or 'cognitive interpretations'. For Gell's definition of art objects (or 'Indexes' as he calls them), see Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 27.

¹⁴ For the idea of the patron as the 'social causation' of art, see Gell, *Art and Agency*, pp. 33–34.

¹⁵ For descriptions of the dismembered portions of the manuscript, see '*Piers Plowman*': *The C Version*, ed. by George Russell and George Kane (London: Athlone Press, 1997), pp. 1–2; A. I. Doyle, 'Remarks on Surviving Manuscripts of *Piers Plowman*', in *Middle English Religious and Ethical Literature: Essays in Honour of G. H. Russell*, ed. by Gregory Kratzmann and James Simpson (Cambridge: Brewer, 1986), pp. 35–48 (p. 44); A. G. Mitchell, 'A Newly Discovered Manuscript of the C-Text of *Piers Plowman*', *Modern Language Review*, 36 (1941), 243–44; Margaret Canney, *The Sterling Library: A Catalogue of the Printed Books and Literary Manuscripts Collected by Sir Louis Sterling and Presented by him to the University of London* (Cambridge: privately printed, 1954), pp. 544–45; M. C. Seymour, 'The English Manuscripts of *Mandeville's Travels*', *Edinburgh Bibliography Society Transactions*, 5 (1966), 169–98 (p. 198); J. W. Bennett, *The Rediscovery of Sir John Mandeville* (New York: Modern Language Association,

The undivided book originally contained a collection of six Middle English texts: *Handlyng Synne*, *Meditations on the Supper of the Lord and Hours of the Passion*, *Mandeville's Travels*, *Piers Plowman*, *Estoire del Evangeli*, and the *Assumption of Our Lady*. The miscellany was impressively proportioned, originally containing 248 folios, with the vellum leaves measuring 365mm x 250mm. It has the appearance of a carefully planned and professionally executed commission. The manuscript is so-called because it has been linked to the wealthy West Midlands landholder Sir William Clopton, the stepson of a chief steward to Richard Beauchamp and a member of the Earl's military retinue. The primary evidence which has encouraged previous commentators to link the manuscript with William Clopton is the presence of three heraldic shields on the lower margin of folio 1^r of the Folger manuscript, the central device apparently depicting Clopton impaling Besford, and the two other shields purportedly representing the charges of the affiliated Throckmorton family and Clopton's stepfather Crewe. As William married Joan Besford c. 1403, it has been argued that the manuscript was commissioned by Clopton sometime between 1403 and the year of his death, 1419. Examination of palaeographical features and analysis of the decoration in the book unanimously agree that the book dates from the first quarter of the fifteenth century. However, as most descriptions of the armorials note, the dexter (Clopton) side of the central shield and both the Crewe and Throckmorton devices have been portrayed inaccurately, with only the Besford arms depicted as they should be.¹⁶ Although I agree with Thorlac Turville-Petre that, despite the inaccurate tincturing, the Clopton/Besford identification is correct, nevertheless the heraldic shields may provide a clue that William Clopton was not, in fact, the original commissioner of the book. At the point of commissioning at least, this may not have been Clopton's manuscript. The patron of this book was at pains to mark the opening page of *Handlyng Synne* and the inception of *Piers Plowman* and *Mandeville's Travels* with elaborate borders and fine illuminated initials, attributes which one might argue have a performative purpose, in Laurel Amtower's words, 'advertisement(s) of the importance of the manuscript [...] and the worth

1954), pp. 289–90; N. R. Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), I, 376–77; Thorlac Turville-Petre, 'The Relationship of the Vernon and Clopton Manuscripts', in *Studies in the Vernon Manuscript*, ed. by Derek Pearsall (Cambridge: Brewer, 1990), pp. 29–44 (pp. 35–36); *Handlyng Synne*, ed. by Idelle Sullens (Binghampton: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1983), pp. xxvii–xxviii.

¹⁶ For the best description of the inept tincturing, see Turville-Petre, 'Vernon and Clopton Manuscripts', p. 36.

and connoisseurship of its owners'.¹⁷ Indeed, the spacious dimensions of the pages, relative to the double columns of thirty-seven lines (and the single columns of *Piers Plowman*) demonstrates what Hanna has called 'a form of excess', as the manuscript might clearly have been produced in a more compact fashion and thus less expensive format.¹⁸ Interestingly, such impressive attributes are in some respects a veneer that flakes away as one actually turns to the pages beyond the three decorated sides. Those capitals in red and blue ink which subsequently appear in the book are of a pedestrian type, and only guide letters appear in the latter stages of the production. Such factors appear to evidence an aspirational commissioner, someone aiming to simulate the de luxe codices of wealthier patrons, but unable to match the expenditure entailed in such productions. The glaring blank spaces in the fifth text in the book, *Estoire del Evangelie*, when compared with the sumptuous miniatures accompanying the version of that text in the Vernon manuscript (Bodleian, MS Eng. poet. a. 1) seem to confirm such a view. Nevertheless, the commissioner of the Clopton manuscript was asserting a sense of economic confidence and no doubt aiming to possess a fitting expression of refined taste articulated through this material production. In this respect the manuscript raises interesting comparisons with the utilitarian books produced by Shirley, untidy gatherings which seemingly reveal a zealous enthusiasm for literature, particularly in respect of their seeming status as 'common-profit' productions, books intended by Shirley to engender 'pleasaunce' within a reading community. In contrast the Clopton manuscript appears something of a conspicuous extravagance, a codex that almost certainly has more to do with the aggrandizement of its owner than it does with the communal celebration of vernacular literature. Such reflections may have a bearing on our consideration of the armorials on folio 1^r of the manuscript. The fact that the heraldic devices are of a considerably inferior quality than the excellent borders which frame the manuscript's first integral page (which were probably executed by a professional limner in London) is perhaps of more significance than the inaccurate tincturing.¹⁹ Josephine Bennett argued that the

¹⁷ Laurel Amtower, *Engaging Words: The Culture of Reading in the Later Middle Ages* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), p. 32.

¹⁸ Hanna makes this argument with respect to Bodleian, MS Bodley 953, a manuscript commissioned by Sir Thomas Berkeley; see 'Sir Thomas Berkeley', p. 884.

¹⁹ For the likelihood that the Clopton manuscript was produced in London, see Doyle, 'Remarks on Surviving Manuscripts', p. 43. Linne Mooney, although restricted to viewing a reproduced image of the decoration, agrees that the decoration is indicative of a metropolitan style from the first quarter of the fifteenth century (personal communication to the author, 31 March

armorials were 'no part of the original design of the page [...] they were added much later, perhaps in the fifteenth or even sixteenth century by a much poorer artist'.²⁰ Although Bennett is almost certainly wrong in her assessment that the armorials might have been added in the sixteenth century (the configuration of these three devices only appears to make sense within living memory of the unique association of Crewe, Throckmorton, and Clopton) there is no doubt that the obvious discrepancy in quality between the disheveled heraldic shields and the incomparable borders are a crucial clue that Sir William Clopton probably did not commission this manuscript. Having gone to the expense of high quality borders, it must be considered unlikely that the commissioner would scrimp in the design and execution of the very devices which are intended to unite the book with the patron and his affiliates. Furthermore, the shields on either side of the Clopton charge do not square properly with the hanging pendants which were designed to append armorial devices to the borders.²¹ Tantalizingly, the tips of these foliated loops appear to be missing, perhaps through design, but plausibly because of erasure. Perhaps there was once an original, superior set of armorials, fitted to the initial design of the manuscript, which was removed to make way for the shabby extant charges.²² Although it seems probable that the Clopton/Besford, Throckmorton, and Crewe identifications are correct and the manuscript may thus be connected to a milieu in the compass of the Earl of Warwick, these arms should not be relied upon to identify the original commissioner of the Clopton manuscript. It seems entirely likely that these armorials record a moment in the reception history of the manuscript which postdates a former period of ownership. In other words it may be possible to identify a more likely

2004). For discussion and an image of the decoration of this manuscript, see Doyle and Parkes, 'Production of Copies', pp. 177, 181 (plate 52), 192–93, 195, 200. For images of the decorated folios in the Clopton manuscript, see Turville-Petre, 'Vernon and Clopton Manuscripts', p. 37 (fol. 1 of Folger Library V.b.236); and Canney, *Sterling Library: A Catalogue*, plate IV.

²⁰ Bennett, *Rediscovery of Sir John Mandeville*, p. 290.

²¹ For discussion of the various ways in which limners incorporated the heraldic arms of the patron into a manuscript, including the method used in the Clopton manuscript, 'hung from a branch or loop of the border', see Kathleen Scott, 'Caveat Lector: Ownership and Standardization in the Illustration of Fifteenth-Century English Manuscripts', *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700*, 1 (1989), 19–63 (p. 21).

²² Unfortunately, I have been unable to study this manuscript in the Folger Library. Analysis of fol. 1 under ultraviolet might establish if this manuscript hides an original, superior set of armorials.

commissioner for the manuscript, or at least, to imagine the characteristics which might apply to a likely patron.

Sourcing the Clopton Exemplars

Identifying the processes by which diverse texts came to be copied together in later medieval manuscripts is often the most imponderable of the critical problems which face the codicologist. Should the miscellany, a unique configuration of texts, be understood as an intrinsically arbitrary happening, a collection of works which coalesced in a manner described by Hanna as ‘catch as catch can’, or does the formation of a set of texts suggest the book is a systematic arrangement, an exclusive material canon of individual or institutional sponsorship?²³ This is a question which rarely can or, indeed, *should* be answered definitively; whether the juxtaposition of certain texts appears to defy logic or if a gathering of writings appears to evidence design, it may often be the case that accident, coincidence, and compromise, irrecoverable events, facilitated the construction of medieval codices. In terms of the Clopton manuscript, several factors hint that the production is, at least to some extent, a collection of works which have been deliberately assembled. The book was not produced in piecemeal fashion, but was apparently a professional production, written in a clear professional bastard Anglicana script by a single scribe. The volume was probably decorated, if not also transcribed, in London and was commissioned by a consumer who in all likelihood (as will be suggested by the following argument) supplied the producer(s) with a selection of texts for transcription. It is fairly certain that the commissioner of the manuscript came across some of the texts already assembled together in exemplars. At least two of the texts in the Clopton manuscript, *Handlyng Synne* and *Meditations*, were not acquired independently, but came packaged together in the same source manuscript, a fact evidenced by the appearance of this textual pairing in

²³ See Ralph Hanna, *Pursuing History: Middle English Manuscripts and their Texts* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 9. I realize that ‘anthology’ might be considered a useful word to describe collections which evidence planning. However, because this term seems to elide the potential for compromise and accident in textual selection I prefer to work with the messier expression ‘miscellany’. For further discussion of these issues, see Jason O’Rourke, ‘Imagining Book Production in Fourteenth Century Herefordshire: The Scribe of British Library MS. Harley 2253 and his “Organising Principles”’, and Derek Pearsall, ‘The Whole Book: Late Medieval Miscellanies and their Modern Interpreters’, in *Imagining the Book*, ed. by Stephen Kelly and John J. Thompson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 45–60 and pp. 17–29.

two other manuscripts immediately related to the Clopton exemplar.²⁴ It is therefore possible that other texts within the Clopton manuscript may similarly have been conjoined and copied collectively by the scribe, something which might hint at a level of arbitrariness in the arrangement of texts in the Clopton collection. Due to the problems inherent in constructing a rationale for conscious textual selection (*why* these texts were chosen), the following discussion will be interested in *how* the texts in the Clopton manuscript came together, tracing the possible networks in which the exemplars for the book circulated, and how the overlaps in these networks resulted in the formation of this particular collection of texts.

Although the discrepancy between the borders and armorials should warn against the uncritical assumption that William Clopton sponsored this production, the texts which appear in the book do indicate that the book was commissioned by a well-connected West Midlands patron. Indeed, to explain the unique conjunction of these six texts, the most plausible account may be that the patron had access to texts which were absorbed by, then transmitted and copied within, the cultural milieu of the Earl of Warwick's household. Of the six Middle English texts contained in the manuscript, the latter four, *Mandeville's Travels*, *Piers Plowman*, *Estoire del Evangelie*, and *Assumption of Our Lady*, have been copied by the scribe in a range of West Midlands dialects. *Piers Plowman* and *Estoire del Evangelie*, two of the three religious works contained in the third segment of the codex (University of London, Sterling V. 17) have been mapped by *LALME*, and the texts have been located respectively to reference points 380 243 and 382 266, in south-west Worcestershire and north-west Worcestershire. Although *Mandeville's Travels*, now in Princeton, Taylor 10, has not been mapped, I have compared the spelling practices with those in *Piers Plowman* and *Estoire del Evangelie* and deduced that this work was also copied from a West Midlands exemplar. Indeed, judging from the particular similarity of its forms to those used in *Piers Plowman*, it is possible that the exemplar for *Mandeville's Travels* was also written in south-west Worcestershire (or by a scribe who was trained in this region).²⁵ Similarly, the *Assumption of Our Lady* is copied in a dialect which appears to be from the West Midlands, and is also probably localizable in Worcestershire.

²⁴ The relationship between the Clopton manuscript and the two books which similarly contain *Handlyng Synne* and *Meditations* will be discussed below.

²⁵ Seymour's study of the *Mandeville's Travels* portion of the manuscript locates the scribe to early fifteenth-century Worcestershire, but Seymour does not indicate if this is based on dialectal analysis of the text in Princeton, Taylor 10 or on biobibliographical knowledge; see 'English Manuscripts', p. 198.

Interestingly, another West Midlands text of the *Assumption* survives in BL, MS Additional 10036, a vellum manuscript that is similarly dated to the early fifteenth century.²⁶ This text has been dialectally located in Warwickshire where Beauchamp enjoyed a further concentration of connections on a par with his Worcestershire affiliations.²⁷ Although the nature of the relationship between the texts in Clopton and BL Add. 10036 needs more investigation than I can afford in this essay, the existence of a Warwickshire *Assumption* in combination with two contemporary Worcestershire versions of the text hints at a degree of localized circulation for the work.²⁸ In contrast to the mixture of West Midlands forms we find in these texts, the two opening items in the manuscript, *Handlyng Synne* and *Meditations on the Supper of our Lord*, have been copied in what Idelle Sullens has called a 'mixed East Midland dialect'.²⁹ Obviously, the medley of dialectal forms in the Clopton manuscript would suggest that the scribe copied these texts *literatim* rather than imposing dialectal conformity on the exemplars used. According to recent investigations by Simon Horobin which suggest that professional London scribes were particularly likely to reproduce unfamiliar dialects without interference, the copying practices of the scribe may further suggest that the Clopton manuscript was a metropolitan production.³⁰

Crucially, in terms of locating the origins of the exemplars utilized by the scribe, two of the West Midlands texts, *Evangelie* and *Piers Plowman*, have close genetically related texts preserved within surviving manuscripts. Turville-Petre has connected the Clopton *Evangelie* to the example of the text in that extraordinary

²⁶ See Turville-Petre, 'Vernon and Clopton Manuscripts', p. 41; *List of Additions to the Manuscripts in the British Museum, MDCCCXXXVI–MDCCCXL* (London, 1843), p. 5; *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English, 1050–1500*, vol. II, ed. by J. Burke Severs (New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1970), pp. 450–51, 642–44. The manuscript is a Middle English religious miscellany containing, amongst other texts, *Titus and Vespasian*, a paraphrase of the paternoster, and a translation of the fifty-first psalm.

²⁷ See LALME, LP4063, grid 447 256. For Beauchamp's Warwick holdings, see Ross, *Estates and Finances*, p. 20.

²⁸ I say there were two Worcestershire versions of the text because if the Clopton scribe does copy the exemplars *literatim* (see below), a Worcestershire exemplar must have been used.

²⁹ Idelle Sullens, 'A Study of the Bodley MS 415 of Robert Mannyng of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne*' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 1959), p. 66.

³⁰ In Simon Horobin, '“Yn London and Opeland”: The Dialect and Circulation of the C Version of *Piers Plowman*', *Medium Ævum*, 74 (2005), 248–69.

West Midlands vernacular book, the Vernon manuscript.³¹ He argues that the conformity between the texts and the north Worcestershire dialect employed in the Clopton and Vernon copies of the *Evangelie* is close enough that both may have used the same exemplar. The link between Vernon and the Clopton *Evangelie* potentially allows us a glimpse of the kinds of networks the texts in the Clopton manuscript came from. Because it is believed that the sources tapped for the encyclopedic Vernon manuscript were often institutional repositories such as monastic and cathedral libraries, Turville-Petre's assertion suggests that the commissioner of the Clopton manuscript had access to texts which circulated between religious houses in the area north of the city of Worcester. In exploring such potential intersections between members of the Beauchamp affinity and religious institutions, it is perhaps no coincidence that Richard Beauchamp held a concentration of manorial interests in the north Worcestershire area, where it is thought that Vernon was produced, and where some of its texts were almost certainly sourced.³² In addition to the Warwick summer residence of Salwarpe, there were four manors owned by the Earl in the vicinity of the Cistercian abbey at Bordesley, a little over fifteen miles north-east of Worcester. This institution has been firmly linked to Vernon through BL, MS Additional 37787, the manuscript commissioned or produced by the Cistercian John Northwood. Containing twenty texts in English, Latin, and French, Northwood's book includes fourteen works which are similarly found in Vernon, and Doyle has argued that Northwood and the producers of Vernon may have had a shared 'source volume' when making their compilations, a production scenario which fits well with the theory that Vernon was sponsored or produced by Cistercians.³³ Although Northwood's anthology of texts does not include the *Evangelie*, his book shows clearly that north Worcestershire was an area deeply implicated in the circulation of the texts which found their way into the hands of the producers of Vernon. Perhaps

³¹ Turville-Petre, 'Vernon and Clopton Manuscripts', pp. 29–35.

³² For a list of the manors inherited and accrued by Beauchamp, see Ross, *Estates and Finances*, pp. 20–23.

³³ For discussion of this manuscript and the possible Cistercian connections of Vernon and its sister manuscript Simeon (BL, MS Additional 22283), see Nita Scudder Baugh, *A Worcestershire Miscellany* (Philadelphia: privately printed, 1956), esp. pp. 35–45. The relationship between BL Add. 37787, Vernon, and Simeon is also discussed in A. I. Doyle, 'The Shaping of the Vernon and Simeon Manuscripts', in *Studies in the Vernon Manuscript*, ed. by Pearsall, pp. 1–14 (p. 9); and *The Vernon Manuscript: A Facsimile of Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Eng. poet.a.1.*, ed. A. I. Doyle (Cambridge: Brewer, 1987), pp. 11–15.

tellingly, previous generations of the Beauchamp family had certainly maintained bibliophilic connections with Bordesley. Guy Beauchamp, the great-grandfather of the Earl of Warwick, had donated a large collection of books to the abbey in 1305. Indeed, as John J. Thompson has noted, 'the formal terms of this book deposit ensured long-term access rights to the Bordesley holdings for later Beauchamp family members'.³⁴

Northwood's book eventually came to be in the possession of a woman whose grandfather had been at the heart of the Beauchamp affinity. By the late fifteenth century the book belonged to Goditha Throckmorton, the granddaughter of John Throckmorton.³⁵ John, a lawyer, MP, and the Warwick-nominated chamberlain of the Exchequer, had been at the head of Beauchamp's council between 1417 and the Earl's death and was the most prominent member of the lawyer squirearchy who lay at the core of the 'series of concentric circles with the earl at the centre'.³⁶ Although we cannot be entirely sure how BL Add. 37787 came into Goditha's possession, the most plausible explanation may be that the book passed from Bordesley into the Beauchamp family's ownership, and thence into the Throckmorton family. Further connections with this West Midlands reading community and the producers of Vernon are also suggested by the provenance of Oxford, University College, MS 97, a manuscript which contains ten texts which similarly appear in Vernon's sister manuscript, Simeon.³⁷ The book was seemingly owned by the Worcestershire priest William Countour, an employee of Richard Beauchamp's uncle, William, Lord Abergavenny.³⁸ Countour's book adds further weight to the idea that the texts which were utilized by the producers of Vernon and Simeon could have been accessed by members of the Beauchamp milieu.

³⁴ See John J. Thompson, 'Postscript: Authors and Audiences', in *The Arthur of the English*, rev. edn (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2001), pp. 371–95 (p. 377).

³⁵ For discussion of Goditha's possession of the book and of her sister Elizabeth's contact with vernacular religious literature, see Mary C. Erler, *Women, Reading, and Piety in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 100–15.

³⁶ Carpenter, 'Beauchamp Affinity', p. 515.

³⁷ Doyle, 'Shaping', p. 9. For Oxford, University College 97, see A. I. Doyle, 'University College, Oxford, MS. 97 and its Relationship to the Simeon Manuscript', in *So Meny People, Longages and Tongues: Philological Essays in Scots and Mediaeval English Presented to Angus McIntosh*, ed. by Michael Benskin and M. L. Samuels (Edinburgh: privately published, 1981), pp. 265–82; Turville-Petre, 'Vernon and Clopton Manuscripts', p. 42.

³⁸ See Doyle, 'University College, Oxford, MS. 97', pp. 272–73; Turville-Petre, 'Vernon and Clopton Manuscripts', p. 42.

Moreover, such evidence of textual dissemination provides an indication, however vestigial, of the tangible human relationships which facilitated the movement of books and the transcription of texts in the later medieval West Midlands.

With this in mind, it might be worth noting Doyle's assertion that 'the sources tapped for V/S were diverse professionally', and exemplars were seemingly drawn from various strands of the clergy, ranging from the mendicant and monastic orders to the secular and cathedral clergy.³⁹ Evidence for extensive links between members of the Beauchamp affinity and multiple religious institutions offer a labyrinth of possible explanations as to how the *Evangelie*, or indeed texts not included in Vernon such as the *Assumption of Our Lady* and *Mandeville's Travels*, might have entered a Warwick coterie.⁴⁰ Prominent members of the Beauchamp affinity seem to be distinguished by a wholly orthodox form of piety, often establishing close ties with the monastic, secular, and mendicant religious. For example, John Throckmorton collaborated in 1414 with prominent local ecclesiasts to investigate Lollardy in the diocese of Worcester.⁴¹ Indeed, Throckmorton's administrative skills and legal acumen meant that he frequently cooperated with significant institutions and individuals amongst the Worcestershire clergy, including the Abbot of Evesham and the Bishop of Worcester.⁴² The wills of Throckmorton and his fellow Warwick councilor William Woolashull are representative of the Earl's gentry clique in that they further demonstrate bonds with

³⁹ See Doyle, 'Shaping', p. 9.

⁴⁰ An alternative manner in which *Piers Plowman* may have been located will be discussed below.

⁴¹ Interestingly, the names recorded in the 1414 commissions to prosecute Lollardy in Worcester and Warwickshire are almost all Warwick affiliates and the fact that, unusually, the Earl of Warwick's name occurs indicates there may have been an anti-Lollard zeal within the network in the aftermath of the Oldcastle Revolt; see *Calendar of Patent Rolls, Henry V, 1413–22*, 2 vols (London: Public Record Office, 1910–11), I, 177–78.

⁴² Throckmorton's first legal association with the Bishop of Worcester occurs in 1418, when they act against tenants refusing due rents and service; see *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, 1417–31*, vol. VII, ed. by J. A. Twemlow (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1906), p. 85. In 1433, amongst a group of affiliates, he was granted the guardianship of all the temporalities of the Worcestershire bishopric; see *Calendar of the Fine Rolls Henry VI, 1422–1461*, vols XV–XIX of multivolume work (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1911–62), XVI, 171. Throckmorton and his wife Eleanor were welcomed into the confraternity of Evesham on 1 April 1438; see *The Victoria History of the County of Warwick*, 6 vols, ed. by H. Arthur Doubleday, William Page, and others (London: Constable, 1904–), III, 81.

the local and regional religious and similarly include donations to several houses of friars in Worcester, the cathedral in the city, and two Worcestershire Benedictine abbeys, these gifts in addition to bequests to their local parish churches.⁴³

Although leading members of the Beauchamp affinity undoubtedly had links with numerous religious institutions, perhaps a more likely explanation for the occurrence of the texts in the Clopton manuscript is that the exemplars were obtained directly from the Beauchamp household for copying. Certainly, we may assume that because the households of magnates were axial cultural locations, regional assembly points for religious and secular alike, they also acted as nexuses for the transmission and dissemination of religious literature. The potential for such textual acquisition is revealed in a book which contains the brief surviving household accounts of Elizabeth Berkeley/Beauchamp 1420–21. This ledger provides a fascinating glimpse into the customs of the high aristocracy and reveals the pervasive links between the noble household and religious institutions. During the year recorded in the accounts, Elizabeth's household attracted an unremitting stream of guests, who ranged in status from 'humble carriers of wood' to the brother of Henry V, John, Duke of Bedford.⁴⁴ Interestingly, the financial records show that Elizabeth entertained ecclesiasts particularly regularly. As the peripatetic household moved between the various favoured family residences, guests from local religious institutions would join the Countess's table. For instance, in the Warwick summer residence at Salwarpe (five miles north of Worcester and approximately in the dialectal vicinity of the Clopton and Vernon *Evangelie*), Elizabeth received guests including the prior of Worcester Cathedral, friars from Droitwich and Worcester, and the prioress of the Benedictine nunnery of Westwood. Even the less salubrious parochial clergy were welcomed into the Warwick household. As Ross explains, Elizabeth's household accounts indicate that, '[w]herever the countess might be staying it seems to have been her custom to invite the local parish priest [...] to dinner on Sunday'.⁴⁵ Given that elite members of the Warwick household such as Elizabeth Berkeley and her successor as Countess of Warwick, Isabella Despenser, were evidently patrons of literary works of a pious nature, one might expect that the warm relations fostered

⁴³ See *The House of Commons 1386–1421*, ed. by J. S. Roskell, Linda Clark, and Carole Rawcliffe, 4 vols (Stroud: Sutton for the History of Parliament Trust, 1992), IV, 609, 890. Throckmorton's will is also referred to in William Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire* (1656), rev. by William Thomas, 2 vols (Manchester: E. J. Morten, 1973), II, 750.

⁴⁴ See Ross, 'Household Accounts', p. 93, p. 95.

⁴⁵ See Ross, 'Household Accounts', pp. 93–94, quotation at p. 94.

with religious houses could have led to the loaning, acquisition, or receipt of books as gifts. It is thus easy to imagine a work such as the *Evangelie* entering the cultural network of the Beauchamp affinity as a result of the associations that were established through the hospitality offered to the plethora of visiting ecclesiasts. Judging by the enormous list of works ascribed by Ker to the cathedral priory of Worcester alone, the congenial association with the prior of this institution may have offered the possibility of accessing many hundreds of texts.⁴⁶

Indeed, the model whereby the peripatetic Beauchamp household absorbed texts from religious houses may provide the most cogent explanation for the discovery of *Handlyng Synne* and *Meditations* by the patron of the Clopton manuscript. Written in a mixed eastern Middle English dialect which is strikingly different from the assortment of West Midlands forms we find in the latter items in the Clopton manuscript, the texts now housed in the Folger library were apparently not copied from a book produced in the regional power base of the Warwick affinity. Two manuscripts which similarly contain *Handlyng Synne* with *Meditations* attached are BL, MS Harley 1701 and Bodleian, MS Bodley 415. Both of these manuscripts appear to be products of monastic communities in the south-east Midlands, and like the Clopton manuscript are dated to the first quarter of the fifteenth century.⁴⁷ Bodley 415 has the ownership marks of the community of Bonshommes at Ashridge on the Hertfordshire/Buckinghamshire border. The inscription 'Liber domus de Assherug' is written on folio 91^v of the manuscript, and the slightly muddled 'Liber doune de Assherug', possibly in the hand of the scribe, is clearly visible on the front flyleaves of the manuscript. Several features of Harley 1701 have led to the belief that this manuscript was also housed in a monastic institution in south-east England, and it is exceedingly likely that the scribe who transcribed *Handlyng Synne* and *Meditations* copied directly from Bodley 415 as the copyist replicates some orthographic features which are exceedingly idiosyncratic, indeed, almost unique within the *LALME* survey.⁴⁸

Together with the fact that both manuscripts possess this unusual textual pairing there are several factors which mean we can positively link the Ashridge manuscript with the first two texts of the Clopton manuscript. Initially they may

⁴⁶ For the books associated with Worcester Cathedral priory, see Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, pp. 205–15; for the surviving works linked to the Dominican and Franciscan houses in Worcester, see p. 215.

⁴⁷ For the production contexts of these manuscripts, see Perry, 'Cultural Locations of *Handlyng Synne*', pp. 165–237.

⁴⁸ See dot map 172, 'wlde' (would), *LALME*, iv, 347.

be connected because of the close textual similarity of the texts of *Handlyng Synne* and *Meditations*.⁴⁹ Perhaps the most tangible evidence for a relationship emerges from several major lapses by the Clopton scribe. The copyist omits forty lines of text on two occasions and at another point excludes eighty lines of text. It is surely no coincidence that these lapses tally exactly with the foliation of Bodley 415 which has forty lines to a column. The skipped passages in the Clopton manuscript correspond to the second column of folio 27^v, the second column of folio 30^r, and the whole of folio 77^v in the manuscript produced in Ashridge. These lapses convinced Idelle Sullens, the most recent editor of *Handling Synne*, that the Clopton scribe copied directly from Bodley 415. However, my own investigations into the relationship between the texts suggest that Bodley 415 and Clopton share the same exemplar, with the Ashridge scribe slavishly imitating the foliation of the source manuscript. Given the vagaries of scribal copying any further degree of removal between the manuscripts is highly unlikely. The only way to explain the various textual and orthographic variations between the transcriptions is that the scribes of Bodley 415 and the Clopton manuscript were sporadically erring from and emending the same copy text.

The movements of the Beauchamp household (recorded in the accounts of Elizabeth Berkeley) demonstrate that the family possessed the necessary links to acquire or borrow exemplars in precisely the area where Bodley 415 and Harley 1701 were produced. Journeying back to Worcestershire from the Beauchamp's London residence in July 1421, the Countess paused to visit several of Ashridge's significant religious neighbours, including St Albans, Dunstable, and Woburn Abbey.⁵⁰ It is possible that such religious houses may have included the house from which the Bonshommes obtained the conjoined *Handlyng Synne* and *Meditations* exemplar, or a house that subsequently acquired it. Indeed, it is tenable that the tour of religious houses in the region may have differed from year to year. In another year the nomadic aristocratic household may have visited Ashridge itself. The house's possession of the phial of the Holy Blood of Christ (a larger portion of the same relic held at Hailles Abbey) ostensibly the most famous relic

⁴⁹ For examples of stemmata which link the productions (albeit in differing ways), see *Handlyng Synne*, ed. by Sullens, p. xxii; Raymond Biggar, review of *Handlyng Synne*, ed. by Idelle Sullens, *Speculum*, 62 (1987), 969–73 (p. 972); Perry, 'Cultural Locations of *Handlyng Synne*', p. 135.

⁵⁰ There seems to have been a close association between the inner members of the Beauchamp circle and St Albans as a number of the affinity including John Throckmorton and John Shirley became *confratres* of the abbey with the Beauchamp family. See *House of Commons 1386–1421*, ed. by Roskell, Clark, and Rawcliffe, IV, 607; Connolly, *John Shirley*, p. 52.

in the region, might certainly have enticed the pious Warwick *familia* to visit the Bonshommes. In fact, there may be reasons to assume that intersections between the Earl's family and religious institutions in this district were anything but arbitrary. Beauchamp's inheritance included five manors in Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire (his property at Flamstead within only a few miles of Ashridge), and his marriages to the Berkeley and Despenser heirs doubled his landed interests in the area. In the year recorded in the accounts the household stayed at one such holding, the Beauchamp manor at Olney in Buckinghamshire where the travellers were entertained by the rector of Olney, the Warwick receiver general, John Baysham. This was manifestly a district in which the Beauchamp affinity was influential and where connections with the local religious could have facilitated the movement of books.

If the presence of *Evangelie* and *Handlyng Synne* in the Clopton manuscript implies access to conduits of dissemination linked with the professional religious, other texts may best be explained by book traffic between the secular nobility. Potentially, the most tangible evidence that the scribe of the Clopton manuscript had access to texts in the Warwick household comes from what was originally the fourth text in the book, a C-version of *Piers Plowman*. The Clopton *Piers Plowman* has an undoubtedly close genetic relation in TCD, MS 212. The texts in both manuscripts end abruptly in *Passus* XXII with the line 'Largelyche a legyoun lees þe lyf sone', some three-hundred lines before the end of the C-text.⁵¹ The analysis of the textual relationships of the C-versions of *Piers Plowman* by Russell and Kane demonstrates that the texts in the Clopton manuscript and TCD 212 were by far the closest genetically related manuscripts within their survey, 'identified beyond doubt as a genetic pair'.⁵² However, it is clear that TCD 212 was not copied from the Clopton manuscript, evidenced by the fact that the Clopton scribe skips lines which are present in the Dublin manuscript. Neither does it seem that the Clopton *Piers Plowman* employed TCD 212 as its exemplar; given the Clopton scribe's passive adoption of his source's dialect and orthography, the discrepancy in dialectal features between the texts means the scribe must have had access to another text.

⁵¹ I have taken the line from the text in the Clopton manuscript, which corresponds to line 87 in the Russell and Kane edition. The reading in TCD 212 is slightly different orthographically, 'Largeliche a legyon lees þe lyf sone'. The correspondence in the premature endings of the texts in TCD 212 and the Clopton *Piers Plowman*, along with several other correlations, is noted in Mitchell, 'Newly Discovered Manuscript', pp. 243–44.

⁵² *Piers Plowman: The C Version*, ed. by Russell and Kane, p. 24.

The most likely connection, suggested both by Mitchell and by Matheson, is that the works employed the same apparently foreshortened exemplar.⁵³

TCD 212 has proved a source of fascination for Langland scholars because of its unique memorandum on the verso side of the last page of the text, which identifies William Langland as the son of 'Stacy de Rokayle', a tenant of lands belonging to the Despenser family in Shipton-under-Wychwood, Oxfordshire.⁵⁴ The identification of Langland in TCD 212 is particularly attractive to Langland scholars because a Eustace de Rokayle was a tenant of the Despensers in Shipton-under-Wychwood in the late fourteenth century, and thus at least one detail in the memorandum is demonstrably true.⁵⁵ The memorandum is of specific interest within the scope of this discussion because its writer evidently possessed or received knowledge of the Despenser estates and tenants.

The famous ascription in TCD 212 is at the foot of a page containing a sequence of annals, apparently in the same hand, which survey events of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, 'from the standpoint of the South Wales Border district'.⁵⁶ The localized focus demonstrated in the chronicle entries, 'not to be found in the usual run of monastic annals', has led to the conviction that the annotator had access to the monastic chronicles of a religious house in the Monmouthshire area, with the priory of Abergavenny standing out as the most likely source of the material.⁵⁷ The person responsible for the memorandum and annals also made annotations beside the text of the poem, and the

⁵³ See Mitchell, 'Newly Discovered Manuscript', p. 244.

⁵⁴ For discussion of the memorandum, see George Kane, *Piers Plowman: The Evidence for Authorship* (London: Athlone Press, 1965), pp. 26–51; E. St John Brooks, 'The *Piers Plowman* Manuscripts in Trinity College, Dublin', *The Library*, 5th series, 6 (1951), 141–53. I have also been influenced in my thinking by Lister Matheson "Largeliche a legyon lees þe lyf sone": Welsh Annals and Biographical Notes in Trinity College, Dublin MS. 212' (paper presented at Queen's University, Belfast, 12 March 2004). See also the introductory comments in John Scattergood, 'An Unrecorded Fragment of the *Prose Lancelot* in Trinity College, Dublin MS. 212', *Medium Ævum*, 53 (1984), 301–06.

⁵⁵ See Brooks, 'Piers Plowman Manuscripts in Trinity College, Dublin', p. 141. In his paper given at Queen's University, Belfast, Lister Matheson provided further details relating to the Rokayle family of Shipton-under-Wychwood.

⁵⁶ Brooks, 'Piers Plowman Manuscripts in Trinity College, Dublin', p. 144. For analysis of the hand of the ascription and chronicle entries, see Kane, *Piers Plowman*, p. 27, n. 6.

⁵⁷ Brooks, 'Piers Plowman Manuscripts in Trinity College, Dublin', p. 151; for the indication that the annals may have been drawn from the chronicles of the priory of Abergavenny, see pp. 144–51.

marginal inscription, 'anno domini mccccxijo' on folio 15^v, appears to reflect accurately the period in which the annotator had access to the manuscript, and indeed, it is possible the book may have been made only a little before this date. In exactly the same period occurs an event which might explain how the annotator of TCD 212 had gained access to both the Welsh annals and knowledge of tenants in lands belonging to the Despenser family; in 1411 Isabella Despenser, aged only eleven, married Richard Beauchamp, Lord of Abergavenny, and she and her attendants would have taken up residence at Abergavenny at this time. It is possible that Isabella's entourage may have conveyed with them both the exemplar of TCD 212 and, through her clerical staff, knowledge of Despenser lands, including the information concerning the reputed author of *Piers Plowman*. Therefore, according to this provenance for the manuscript, TCD 212 is a copy of a text which belonged to the *familia* of Isabella Despenser following her marriage to Richard, Lord Abergavenny. It is possible that it belonged to the priory of Abergavenny, a view suggested by Brooks which explains the availability of the Welsh chronicles to the annotator.⁵⁸ If the *familia* of Isabella Despenser were prepared to loan the exemplar containing *Piers Plowman*, it is also plausible they would have transmitted the anecdotal reference concerning the author of the text to an interested borrower. Certainly, the noble household at Abergavenny had close links with the priory, which had been founded by a past Lord of Abergavenny.⁵⁹

Naturally, there are other models which might explain the appearance of the annals and the memorandum in TCD 212. Lister Matheson suggested that the annotator may have been a clerk in the service of Isabella Despenser, and that TCD 212 may have thus belonged to the Despenser household. According to this account, a Despenser-affiliated clerk was able to access the Welsh annals following his removal with Isabella to the Abergavenny household and recorded his local knowledge of the Rokayle family in the manuscript. However, one specific piece of evidence makes it appear more likely that it was the missing exemplar of TCD 212 and the Clopton *Piers Plowman* that belonged to the Despensers. The Clopton *Piers Plowman* has been mapped by *LALME* to south-west Worcestershire, its dialect being localized in the immediate environs of Hanley castle (the *LALME* reference point no more than five miles distant from Hanley). As the

⁵⁸ Brooks, 'Piers Plowman Manuscripts in Trinity College, Dublin', p. 153. However, the dialect of TCD 212, mapped in *LALME*, I, 196, to grid 369 230 (LP 7190) on the Gloucestershire/Herefordshire border, might suggest that the manuscript was commissioned by, rather than being produced in, the priory.

⁵⁹ See Brooks, 'Piers Plowman Manuscripts in Trinity College, Dublin', p. 151.

Worcestershire castle was the seat of the Despenser family (and indeed, would become the primary residence of Warwick and Isabella following their marriage in 1423) the proximity of the dialect employed in the Clopton *Piers Plowman* to Hanley strongly suggests that if the Despensers did possess a copy of *Piers Plowman*, it was not TCD 212, but the exemplar employed in the construction of both that manuscript and the Clopton manuscript. If this exemplar remained in the possession of Isabella Despenser, who was by 1413 the sole heir to the Despenser estate, then it is plausible that the manuscript became available for copying within the cultural network of the Beauchamp affinity following the marriage of Isabella Despenser to Richard, Earl of Warwick in 1423. Such a prospect would require us to reinterpret the significance of the armorials on the Clopton manuscript; as William Clopton died in 1419, the only owner they could then relate to is his widow, Joan Besford/Clopton. Naturally, it is also possible that the exemplar was accessed by the patron of the Clopton manuscript before the houses of Warwick and Despenser were coupled. Richard, Lord of Abergavenny was the Earl of Warwick's cousin, and thus traffic between the houses of Warwick and Abergavenny should perhaps be expected. Indeed, some of the inner members of the Warwick circle, whose legal skills were evidently much in demand, performed services for other local magnates. For example, one member of Beauchamp's council, John Harewell (whose son would marry one of Clopton's daughters), was retained by both Warwick and the formidable lady of Abergavenny, Joan Beauchamp/Fitzalan (mother-in-law to Isabella Despenser). Nevertheless, the marriage of Beauchamp to Isabella Despenser has been perceived as a connection which introduced other works into the cultural repertoire of the Beauchamp affinity. A particularly exclusive example is the Anglo-Norman work *Life of the Black Prince*, a text which survives in only two manuscripts, one of which, London, University of London, Senate House Library, MS 1, has the motto-inscription of John Shirley on folio 3r.⁶⁰ According to Connolly, the most likely explanation for Shirley's possession of the manuscript, which is not one of his own transcriptions but was made in England towards the end of the fourteenth century, is that 'he came by it through his connection with the Earl of Warwick'. Connolly suggests that the manuscript's most plausible route into the Warwick household was via Isabella Despenser, who may have either acquired the manuscript through the

⁶⁰ For discussion of the distinctive device Shirley had inscribed into his books, see Connolly, *John Shirley*, pp. 7, 33, 76, 102–07.

Abergavenny household or inherited it from her grandfather Edward Langley, Duke of York.⁶¹

The Commissioner and Movements of the Clopton Manuscript

I suggested above that it may be possible to identify the sorts of attributes that would apply to a potential commissioner of the Clopton manuscript. Certainly, it would appear that the commissioner would have been placed at the heart of the Beauchamp affinity, someone with access to books in the Warwick household. Carpenter has written that those at the centre of the affinity, those with most intimate access to the Beauchamp family were either the Earl's 'councillors', the ambitious band of Worcestershire lawyers who used the Warwick household as a meeting place, or the estate staff, 'receivers, stewards, household officials'.⁶² John Shirley, the one figure we can most positively demonstrate had access to the Beauchamp books, would clearly fall into the latter grouping, having served the Earl's household in various clerical occupations up until the early 1430s. Interestingly, Sir William Clopton might be considered a peripheral member of the Beauchamp affinity. Although documents do situate Clopton as a retainer of the Earl of Warwick from *c.* 1408 and he appears on Beauchamp's muster roll *c.* 1417, there is little to suggest Clopton's active involvement in the affairs of Warwick or his affiliates even while his stepfather was a pivotal figure in the squirearchy.⁶³ Clopton clearly had a military allegiance to Beauchamp and was apparently serving as part of the Earl's force in Calais in 1416. This, however, does not imply that he was a key member of the affinity.⁶⁴ Other than Clopton's single appointment as undersheriff of Worcestershire in 1407, he held no other official rank in his lifetime that marks him out as one of the political and administrative activists in the Beauchamp retinue.⁶⁵ Certainly, he never seems to have been involved in the legal associations which distinguish the Beauchamp affinity. This suggests Clopton was

⁶¹ See Connolly, *John Shirley*, pp. 106–07, quotation at p. 106.

⁶² Carpenter, 'Beauchamp Affinity', p. 515.

⁶³ BL, Egerton Roll 8772 records the retaining of Clopton, and PRO E.101/51/2 is the Warwick muster roll; see Turville-Petre, 'Vernon and Clopton Manuscripts', p. 36 n.15, p. 37.

⁶⁴ Clopton appears as a witness to the will of Sir Baldwin Straunge, who was killed in a sea battle near Calais several weeks later. See Connolly, *John Shirley*, p. 19.

⁶⁵ See *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales, from the Earliest Times to A.D. 1831* (London, 1898), p. 157.

not trained as a lawyer, unlike the majority of the gentry implicated in Warwick's affairs (including both his stepfather and father-in-law). It is possible that the considerable lands inherited by William ensured that he had no economic imperative to train in the legal profession or, indeed, to engage in what Carpenter has called the 'riot of mutual back-scratching', which characterized the Warwick gentry.⁶⁶ The likelihood that Clopton was not one of the inner circle of the affinity further suggests that the manuscript was not constructed at his behest. Another, more plausible scenario may be that the book was commissioned by one of the intimates of the Beauchamp household before being gifted to a Clopton owner. If the *Piers Plowman* exemplar had been sourced while William was still alive (before the marriage of Isabella Despenser and Richard Beauchamp) then the manuscript's original patron may have been someone like Thomas Crewe, Clopton's stepfather, whose arms appear on the manuscript. If the construction of the manuscript postdates the death of Clopton, then the most feasible patron of the manuscript may be a member of the group of Warwick councillors who maintained connections with Joan Clopton after her husband's death. Although a vowess, Joan continued actively to manage the Clopton estates and protect the interests of her two daughters. In this it is perhaps worth noting that she was aided by her nephew, John Throckmorton, the head of Beauchamp's council, who among other services, secured Joan's place as a co-ward to the extensive estates of Sir Hugh Burgh during the minority of his son John.⁶⁷ Interestingly, collaboration between Joan and Throckmorton extended beyond such mutually agreeable economic pacts and took the form of shared devotional practices. On 12 February 1422, the papal registers record the granting of indulgences to 'Joan Clopton, noblewoman [. . .] of the diocese of Worcester' immediately followed in each case by 'John Throckmorton, donsel, of the same diocese, and Eleanor his wife, noblewoman' to have a portable altar and to choose a confessor.⁶⁸ The fact that John Throckmorton applied for these indulgences in concert with Joan strongly suggests the two communicated closely on matters of household piety. It is thus easy to imagine the book moving from the Throckmorton to the Clopton household, where it received its badly executed arms. Interestingly, one of the few marginal

⁶⁶ Carpenter, 'Beauchamp Affinity', p. 525.

⁶⁷ See *Calendar of the Fine Rolls Henry VI, 1422–1460*, xvi, 21; *House of Commons 1386–1421*, ed. by Roskell, Clark, and Rawcliffe, iv, 608.

⁶⁸ *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers 1417–31*, vii, 325, 328. On both occasions the registers record that Joan is the 'relict of John Clopton, knight', but there can be no doubt that this is an error and this is Joan Clopton, widow of Sir William.

names in the manuscript, ‘Thomas Curzon of Croxal in cōtē [county] of derby schyre’, may provide the clue that the manuscript belonged to (or was repossessed by) Throckmorton after Joan’s death in 1430. Throckmorton was an MP during the same period as Curzon’s father, John, and would have had direct dealings with Sir John Curzon who was escheator for Derbyshire in a period when Throckmorton had accrued a valuable wardship in the county (indeed within the administrative district of the Curzon manor of Croxhall).⁶⁹ Such (albeit speculative) phases in the manuscript’s ownership are suggestive of how traffic in cultural artefacts and texts may be seen as enhancing or strengthening the bonds of reciprocity which held gentry alliances together. Indeed, understanding textual dissemination in terms of gift-giving may help to provide useful models for understanding the movement of books within gentry networks.

Performativity and Piety in a West Midlands Reading Community

Whether or not we can identify Throckmorton as commissioner of the manuscript, it is perhaps more significant to imagine the reasons for what Alfred Gell might call the ‘social causation’ of the book rather than merely linking it to a particular name.⁷⁰ I have argued above that akin to the early copying activities of John Shirley, a work such as the Clopton manuscript must be explained as a kind of simulation of the cultural effects of high-status culture. Amtower has written of the particular cultural value books may have held for the socially ambitious gentry:

As books came to be seen as symbols of prestige and culture, their acquisition was mimicked by the class of people most interested in asserting their own gentility [...]. By appropriating books, one of the symbols of prestige with which the aristocracy invested itself, the third estate, with its propensity for self-fashioning, also began to claim higher status by means of a claim to high culture.⁷¹

If the value of reading and book ownership was fêted within the noble household, then it may be argued that a parallel vogue would correspondingly develop within

⁶⁹ For a biography of John Curzon, see J. C. Wedgwood and A. D. Holt, *History of Parliament, Biographies 1439–1509* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1936), pp. 245–46. For Throckmorton’s wardship in Derbyshire, see *Calendar of the Fine Rolls Henry VI, 1422–1460*, XVI, 163; *House of Commons 1386–1421*, ed. by Roskell, Clark, and Rawcliffe, IV, 608.

⁷⁰ Gell argues that in a commissioned work, the patron rather than the artist/artisan is the ‘efficient cause’ of the artwork; see *Art and Agency*, p. 33.

⁷¹ Amtower, *Engaging Words*, pp. 27, 47.

the gentry affinity. Against the backdrop of such reflections, it is possible that a production such as the Clopton manuscript, a book which almost certainly emanated from the Warwick circle, has the potential to illustrate something about the culture of the Beauchamp affinity, not only in terms of the material processes which enabled the copying and dissemination of vernacular literature within the network(s) which orbited the house of Warwick, but in respect of the emblematic and performative function of books within the squirearchy. Such considerations do not only have a bearing on ideas of social and material ambition, but may also reveal the manner in which books operated as symbols of piety and as ‘conduits for theophany’.⁷²

On a narrow parchment scroll, a text containing the advice of some sort of spiritual counsellor, perhaps a confessor or a friar (or both), imagines domestic reading practices in a gentry household:

Eque cito deferatur liber ad mensam sicut panis. Et ne lingua proferat vana seu nociva, legatur nunc ab uno, nunc ab alio, et a filiis statim cum sciant legere [. . .]. Aliquando exponatis in vulgari quod edificet uxorem et alios.

[Let the book be brought to the table as readily as the bread. And lest the tongue say vain or hurtful things, let there be reading, now by one, now by another, and by your children as soon as they can read [. . .]. Expound something in the vernacular which may edify your wife and others.]

The excerpt above is drawn from an oft-cited, but none-the-less unusual, transcript of religious guidance. Entitled ‘Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman’ by W. A. Pantin, the document directs a layman in performances of domestic piety.⁷³ Written, most probably, for John Throckmorton, it potentially provides an insight into the cultural currency and utility of vernacular books within the household of a member of the early fifteenth-century West Midlands gentry.⁷⁴ Reading religious matter at the table in the English vernacular is here constructed as a communal activity, a task to be shared by the family and visitors to the table. More important perhaps than the literal implications of the ‘Instructions’ is the

⁷² Amtower, *Engaging Words*, pp. 27, 47.

⁷³ W. A. Pantin, ‘Instructions for a Devout and Literate Layman’, in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard William Hunt*, ed. by J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 398–422.

⁷⁴ Pantin suggests that John Throckmorton, his son Thomas, or even a member of the related Olney family may have been possible addressees of the document; however, my own investigations strongly suggest that John was the original recipient of the ‘Instructions’. See Pantin, ‘Instructions’, p. 402; Perry, ‘Cultural Locations of *Handlyng Synne*’, pp. 293–97.

sense of emblematic significance books convey in the cultural perspective of the spiritual supervisor and, we may thus presume, from the viewpoint of the original consumer for whom the document was written. The use of books was prescribed by the spiritual advisor not only as a key element of domestic piety, but also as an integral component of the lay recipient's liturgical worship:

When you hear Mass, do not by any means engage in talk with other people; but while the clerks are singing, look at the books of the church; and on every feast day, look at the Gospel and the exposition of it and at the Epistle. There is a certain *Legenda Sanctorum* which is very old; look at that and especially at the Common of Saints at the end of the book.⁷⁵

Guiding his pupil to spiritual excellence, the spiritual advisor appears to direct the layman to detach himself from the communal throng. The means by which this is to be achieved is through the consultation of books within the church. In a sense, the man is to articulate his spiritual distinction from the other worshippers by affixing himself to the church's books. The wording selected by the advisor is notable as he provides these instructions; whereas in the domestic setting, the family is directed to read ('legere') the book, in the church the man is told to look at ('videatis') the respective works belonging to the institution. This distinction is perhaps explained by another of the advisor's directives, to look at a book evidently known to the cleric, 'a certain *Legenda Sanctorum* which is very old'. These comments suggest the book is somehow exceptional, indeed, iconic, not because of the text, but due to the age of the tome. It is almost as if contact with the church's venerable books could in itself be a devotional undertaking. It seems the advisor counsels the handling of the books, viewing them as opposed to actually reading them; he recommends performatively miming the actions of reading. The phenomenological implications of such a perception of the book may also be demonstrated in secular contexts. Alberto Manguel has described how for village storytellers in France, books may be imbued with 'talismanic value'.⁷⁶ The storytellers feign the act of reading from a book as they relate a memorized tale to an audience, ostensibly utilizing the book as a prop, drawing on the impression of 'authority' garnered through their performative exploitation of the book's symbolic value. Perhaps in religious contexts too, the book may have in some respects had a role as a spiritual prop. Mertes argues that 'relics and rosaries [...] were a way of "crystallizing the image" of God, of controlling and becoming one

⁷⁵ Pantin, 'Instructions', p. 399.

⁷⁶ Alberto Manguel, *A History of Reading* (New York: Viking, 1996), p. 120.

with God'.⁷⁷ Perhaps akin to the relationship between the rosary and prayer, where the manipulation of material beads becomes integrated with and crystallizes the ephemeral act of praying, handling and viewing an appropriate book might similarly have been understood as amplifying the liturgical experience through the use of this material, symbolically charged instrument.

Whilst it is, of course, entirely possible that the advisor did intend his adherent to read these works actively (perhaps the distinction between *legere* and *videre* was reading aloud as opposed to reading silently), it is nevertheless evident that the imaginative significance of the book could be more than the sum of its pragmatic function as a repository for texts. Laurel Amtower has written of late medieval reading practices that 'the book itself came to be seen as imbued with sacramental attributes that could be directly fused with the individual reader', that the book was understood in its own right as a religious symbol and material agent of spiritual intensity.⁷⁸ In a sense, a magnificent or ancient book might be comparable to a crucifix, relic, or rosary; a book might become a potent and recognizable spiritual emblem.

Such a viewpoint may enlighten our understanding of how the commissioner of the Clopton manuscript understood his own book; why did he/she go to the expense of having it made, and why was it filled with certain texts? I discussed above some of the material aspects of the manuscript: the impressive size of the book, and thus the spacious dimensions of the pages relative to text, demonstrated a conspicuous assertion of social confidence. Perhaps the same might be said of the textual composition of the manuscript. The contents of the manuscript may have had a symbolic value in addition to their pragmatic function as reading material. If, as seems plausible, many if not all of the manuscript's exemplars were drawn from books in the possession of the Beauchamp family, then it may be argued that the choice of texts was, in itself, a celebration of the commissioner's close links with the Warwick household. The commissioner's ability to install these texts in the book suggests a privileged role at the heart of the Beauchamp affinity. The texts in the Clopton manuscript may thus be read emblematically in addition to pragmatically. Ostensibly, it was not only the texts that were intended to be read; in terms of cultural impact, the entire material artefact was a symbol that might

⁷⁷ Mertes, 'Household as a Religious Community', p. 129, quoting from Jan Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life, Thought, and Art in France and the Netherlands in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, trans. by F. Hopman (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), p. 172.

⁷⁸ Amtower, *Engaging Words*, p. 47.

be read and understood, by the commissioner, his family, and their circle of gentry associates. Gell has provided an analogy which has fascinating implications for the study of later medieval manuscript culture:

Artworks [...] come in families, lineages, tribes, whole populations, just like people. They have relationships with one another as well as with the people who create and circulate them as individual objects. They marry so to speak, and beget offspring which bear the mark of their antecedents.⁷⁹

The 'relationships' which existed between books and the persons who handled them have ever interested codicologists, and it is significant that in tracing textual stemmata we similarly use the language of genealogy, often explaining dissemination in terms of parentage and ancestry. In accordance with this analogy one might describe the Clopton manuscript and even Shirley's productions as the bastard children of more de luxe codices.⁸⁰ Perhaps the commissioner of the Clopton manuscript felt that it was inadequate to merely possess the texts of social superiors in just any format, such as John Shirley's functional but unattractive creations. The manuscript commissioned by this member of the West Midlands gentry was intended not only as a textual but moreover a material simulation of the books possessed by the high nobility and was a book which was intended to 'bear the mark', perhaps, of manuscripts owned by the Beauchamp family.

⁷⁹ Gell, *Art and Agency*, p. 153.

⁸⁰ Remarking on Shirley's metropolitan copying activities, A. S. G. Edwards argues that the manuscripts he manufactured were, 'the replication in modest formats of texts that elsewhere had circulation as deluxe books, presumably to make such works available to metropolitan, non-aristocratic, audiences' ('John Shirley and the Emulation of Courtly Culture', p. 311).

INVENTING VISUAL HISTORY: RE-PRESENTING THE LEGENDS OF WARWICKSHIRE

Martha W. Driver

This essay examines the visual representation of Warwickshire families in the fifteenth century as shown in the Beauchamp Pageants and related Rous rolls as well as in New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 956, a late sixteenth-century heraldic roll. The central subjects are BL, MS Additional 48976, 'Chronicle and Armorial of the Benefactors of Warwick and of the Earls of Warwick', in Middle English (known as the 'Rous roll'), copied between 1483 and 1485, and London, College of Arms, MS Warwick Roll, a Latin version of the chronicle roll, dated between 1477 and 1485, both most likely made in Warwickshire, along with the well-known Beauchamp Pageants, BL, Cotton MS Julius E. IV, Article 6. This is a series of fifty-five captioned drawings in pencil and brown ink, fifty-three of which represent 'pageants', or historical events in the life of Richard Beauchamp (1382–1439), Earl of Warwick, with two genealogical charts of his descendants.¹ The manuscript is dated about 1483 to 1487. After

¹ A version of this essay was presented at the Manuscripts of the West Midlands conference (Birmingham, April 2003). I thank Wendy Scase and Rebecca Farnham for their organization of this stimulating conference as well as for their support and patience. Alexandra Sinclair has titled her recent facsimile edition *The Beauchamp Pageant* (Donington: Paul Watkins, 2003), but comments: 'the set of folios is known as the *Beauchamp Pageant* or *Pageants*' (p. 1), the latter being the more frequently found title. See William, Earl of Carylfort, *The Pageants of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, Reproduced in Facsimile from the Cottonian MS Julius E. IV in the British Museum* (Oxford: Roxburgh Club, 1908); Kathleen L. Scott, 'The Beauchamp Pageants', in Scott, *The Caxton Master and his Patrons* (Cambridge: Cambridge Bibliographical Society, 1976), pp. 55–56 passim; and Scott's description of 'The Pageants of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick', in Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts 1390–1490*, 2 vols (London: Harvey Miller, 1996), II, item 137, pp. 355–59. I have followed this earlier convention in previous publications. See Martha

examination of these three West Midlands manuscripts, with particular focus on the networks of patronage, scribes, and artists that produced them, the essay will conclude with a brief look at Morgan M. 956 as a late reflection of the intellectual and antiquarian pursuits that began the fifteenth century. Morgan M. 956 was made in the second half of the sixteenth century, produced near the end of a long line of fabulous illustrated genealogical histories of important West Midlands families.

Many manuscripts with West Midlands connections exist in multiple languages, most notably BL, MSS Harley 913 and Harley 2253. This is also the case with the Rous rolls and Beauchamp Pageants, and the later Morgan manuscript, in which the interplay between visual and verbal language is notable. Clearly the readers of these chronicles understood heraldic imagery and were conversant with visual as well as verbal representation of historical and pseudo-historical figures. What do these illustrated manuscripts reveal, consciously and unconsciously, about their making? Are they history or propaganda (or both)? How might they be interpreted now, and what, precisely, was their original intention then? To begin to address these questions, brief descriptions of the Rous rolls and Beauchamp Pageants are provided. To give some further context, books in the Beauchamp circle are more generally discussed; then specific activities of scribes and artists are analysed. The three fifteenth-century manuscripts, very likely made to restore their patron, Anne, Countess of Warwick, to royal favour, share an emphasis on ancestry, arms, and heraldic insignia with Morgan M. 956, which was made over a hundred years later, perhaps as a gift for another royal woman, Elizabeth I. 'Given that much of what a family — any family — is depends upon how it is represented, we must', as R. Howard Bloch has said, '[. . .] look first to their constitution of themselves through certain symbols — to what might be termed the family's "practice of signs".'² We turn now to a brief examination of those representations.

Driver, *The Image in Print: Book Illustration in Late Medieval England* (London: British Library Publications and University of Toronto, 2004), pp. 152–54; Driver, 'Morgan MS M. 956 and an Important Early Collector', in *The Medieval Book and a Modern Collector: Essays in Honour of Toshiyuki Takamiya*, ed. by Takami Matsuda, Richard A. Linenthal, and John Scahill (Cambridge: Brewer; Tokyo: Yushodo Press, 2004), pp. 381–404 (pp. 389–92); and Driver, 'Medievalizing the Classical Past in Morgan M 876', in *Middle English Poetry: Texts and Traditions in Honour of Derek Pearsall*, ed. by A. J. Minnis (York: York Medieval Press with Boydell and Brewer, 2001), pp. 216–19.

² R. Howard Bloch, *Etymologies and Genealogies: A Literary Anthropology of the French Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 75.

Both Rous rolls, with captions in English and Latin respectively, are attributed to John Rous (1411–91), and both may have been made, as the Beauchamp Pageants manuscript certainly was, for Anne Neville, Countess of Warwick, and widow of the ‘Kingmaker’ Richard Neville (1428–71). Anne was born in 1426 and survived to the beginning of 1493. Her father, the fifteenth Earl of Warwick, founded the chantry at Guy’s Cliff where John Rous was employed as a priest. Rous was also an antiquary of some note and the author of a *Historia regum Angliae*.³ On the verso of the Latin roll, there is a portrait of Rous shown seated in a chair compiling his roll, with the inscription, ‘Artibus Oxonie donatus honore magistri’ (indicating that he received his MA at Oxford) and shields which seem to pun on his name.⁴ Both rolls were made between the death of the Duke of Clarence in 1477 and the death of Richard III in 1485, and both were originally composed for a Yorkist audience, made perhaps most immediately for the widowed Anne, ‘although the intention has been more commonly attributed to a straightforward desire to please and impress the current Lords of Warwick, Richard III and his queen consort, the countess Anne’s daughter, Queen Anne Neville’.⁵ Both Rous rolls were based on the Salisbury roll, also made for the Neville family (c. 1463–71) and known to Rous.⁶

³ BL, Cotton MS Vespasian A. XII, ed. by Thomas Hearne, *Joannis Rossi Antiquarii Warwicensis Historia Regum Angliae*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1716; J. Fletcher and J. Pote, 1745). Martin Lowry, ‘John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle’, *Viator*, 19 (1988), 327–38, citing Leland, notes that six other, longer works were attributed to Rous, of which ‘four of them dealt with topics of parochial or diocesan interest — the antiquities of Guy’s Cliff, the history of Warwick, the lives of its earls, and the lives of the bishops of Worcester’ (p. 328).

⁴ Anthony Richard Wagner, *Aspilogia, Being Materials of Heraldry: A Catalogue of English Medieval Rolls of Arms* (Oxford: Charles Batey for Society of Antiquaries, 1940), p. 117: ‘Argent à rose gules seeded and charged with a letter V or (the Rose and its colour pun on Rous; the V may be for Varicensis or to complete the pun by making Rose into Rouse). At the head of the chair is a shield Quarterly 1 and 4. 3 bars (?sable) on a bend (?argent) 3 cross crosslets (?sable).’ The portrait of Rous was engraved and included in William Dugdale’s *Antiquities of Warwickshire* (London, 1656).

⁵ Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III’s Books: Ideals and Reality in the Life and Library of a Medieval Prince* (Stroud: Sutton, 1997), comment: ‘There is little doubt that the rolls were finished in time for them to have been shown to Richard III, Anne Neville, his queen, and their young son during their visit to Warwick in the summer of ’83’ (p. 146). Ann Payne, ‘The Beauchamps and the Nevilles’, in *Gothic Art for England 1400–1547*, ed. by Richard Marks and Paul Williamson (London: V&A Publications, 2003), pp. 219–33 (p. 220).

⁶ Wagner, *Aspilogia*, p. 103. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, item 96, pp. 268–71, provides a complete description of this genealogical chronicle and armorial record of the Earldom of

After Bosworth, Rous expurgated the Latin roll to suit Lancastrian interests (though the English roll remained intact). In the Latin roll, the portrait of Richard III was eliminated, replaced by the figure of Edward, Prince of Wales, while in the portrait of Richard's wife, Anne Neville (daughter of Rous's patron, Anne Neville, Countess of Warwick), the royal insignia were purposely removed. The Latin roll in the College of Arms has sixty-six coloured drawings of the Kings of England, as well as of royal and other benefactors to Warwick and to the Earls of Warwick, with narrative histories of their lives in Latin, and shields or banners of their arms above, together with pedigrees. On the back are forty-three banners of arms, with the portrait of Rous.⁷ The English roll has sixty-four coloured drawings in brown ink with a delicate yellow wash on all crowns; the heraldic insignia are vividly coloured.⁸ In the English version, Anne Neville, the queen of Richard III, is shown wearing her crown and ermine robes and holding a crossed orb and sceptre. On the back are painted ninety-four banners of arms, including the forty-three banners in the Latin version. The final drawing represents Prince Edward (d. April 1484) as a boy in armour holding a sceptre with a boar at his

Salisbury and presents a good case for its patronage by Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury, husband of Anne Neville. Sutton and Visser-Fuchs, *Richard III's Books*, p. 145, suggest that 'The roll was probably made on the occasion of the reburial of the father and uncle of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, at Bisham Priory, 14 February 1463'. A page from the roll is reproduced as item 95, along with a brief description by Payne, 'The Beauchamps and the Nevilles', p. 231.

⁷ Rous describes Richard III in his roll as a benevolent but strict ruler, having the 'love of all hys subiettyes Ryche and pore' (item 63); later, in *Historia regum Angliae*, Rous will say that the same King was born after a two-year gestation with teeth and hair in his shoulder, killed his nephews, poisoned his wife, and murdered King Henry VI with his own hands (pp. 120–21). Wagner, *Aspilogia*, p. 117, cites seventeenth-century copies made of the Latin roll by the antiquarian William Dugdale (Bodleian, MS Ashmole 839, fols 8–31) and by the Somerset herald Robert Glover (Bodleian, MS Dugdale 14, olim Dugdale G.2). Another copy by Sir Simon Archer, made in 1636, is cited by Wagner, *Aspilogia*, p. 119, as being deposited at Shakespeare's Birthplace Museum, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire; this collection also housed a copy of the English roll made by Sir Simon Archer, with a heading in the hand of Dugdale, 'The copy of an other Rolle of Rouses remayning in the Herauldes office 1640'.

⁸ Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 359, finds sixty-five drawings. She includes the preliminary drawing of a sleeping bear ('a bear couchant') with a genealogical tree of the House of Warwick represented by a castle with a chained ape in the doorway. The pictures are usually counted from the first portrait illustration in the roll, in this case, of 'King Guthelyn', the founder of Warwick.

feet.⁹ The script, along with the texts, of both rolls is sometimes said 'to be that of Rous himself', though this is among many disputed attributions, as we shall see.¹⁰ Kathleen Scott has speculated further that both rolls might be 'seldom recognized examples (in this period) of book illustration carried out in a private aristocratic location',¹¹ which is very possible. This may not be necessarily true, however, of the Beauchamp Pageants, which appear to have been made, at least in part, in an urban centre.

While the Rous rolls take the familiar form of the heraldic roll of arms and are related stylistically to the Salisbury roll, for example, with their representational drawings of human figures, objects, and buildings, the format of the Beauchamp Pageants is rather singular in presentation. The Beauchamp Pageants, dated, like the Rous rolls, from the mid-1480s, contain a series of drawings in pencil and brown ink presenting events in the life of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, with brief texts describing the action written above (or below) the illustration. Many scenes are framed by architectural details as if the viewer is looking into a room or stage set where the action is occurring.¹² Each page has been ruled, and the picture caption is usually supplied above the picture in a ruled margin, one indication that the captions were supplied after the pictures were drawn. On folio 2^v, the caption describing the coronation of Henry IV's second wife, Joan, cannot

⁹ Wagner, *Aspilogia*, p. 119, cites one sixteenth-century copy with water-colour drawings (BL, MS Lansdowne 882, Pt. 4). The British Library online catalogue describes this manuscript as 'an heraldical Volume compiled and written about the time of Henry VIII' and cites the copy of the Rous roll as part 3: 'The History of the Earls of Warwick, ascribed to John Rouse or Ross of Warwick, with their arms emblazoned, and portraits of them neatly painted in water colours. Although the portraits are imaginary, they are interesting for the armour and costume of a period anterior to the manuscript itself, which is only a copy of some other.' Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', p. 337, comments that the purpose of the rolls 'was probably to remind Richard as tactfully as he could of his Christian duty toward the dowager Countess Anne, and there is no reason to believe that this aim altered when the references to Richard were defaced after the Tudor coup'.

¹⁰ Payne, 'The Beauchamps and the Nevilles', p. 232. See also Archibald G. B. Russell, 'The Rous Roll', *Burlington Magazine*, 3 (1917), 23–31, who states that there are 'two versions of the Warwick roll, both by Rous's own hand' (p. 24).

¹¹ Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 361.

¹² For example, fols 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6^v, 7. For contemporary definitions of the term 'pageants', see A. S. G. Edwards, 'Middle English Pageant "Picture"?', *Notes and Queries*, 237, n.s. 39 (March 1992), 25–26. The term refers to painted or woven pictorial tapestries with accompanying texts, paintings, and manuscript miniatures.

fit at the top of the folio, the main space being taken by the picture, and so is written at the bottom. Elsewhere, script has been crammed into the space left for the text, particularly in one dramatic jousting scene (fol. 16). There are also gaps in the text when pictures protrude into the text space, another indication that text was supplied after the illustrations were drawn.¹³ The pictures themselves are delicately detailed and are often consulted by historians for specific particulars of contemporary costume and armour.¹⁴ The book is, however, unfinished. In a scene of the Visit to the Holy Sepulchre (Pageant XVII), Earl Richard's arms are said in the picture caption to have been 'set vp on the north side of the Temple and there they remayned many yeres after as pilgrymes that longe after come thens reported'. His shield, however, is blank in the drawing. Likewise, banners and the shields in the final two drawings of Earl Richard's descendants have not been filled in.

In effect, the Beauchamp Pageants are a fifteenth-century graphic novel, with primary emphasis on the image and brief descriptive texts sometimes struggling on the page for space. Alexandra Sinclair, in her recent facsimile *The Beauchamp Pageant*, cites two possible manuscript models for such a layout: one leaf from the *Augsburger Chronik* written in 1490, on which a pen drawing has been supplied within a frame with a short caption above, and a manuscript made about 1499 of the *Livre des miracles de Notre Dame de la Poterie*, which contains eighteen drawings 'with the text positioned above and outside the single-line frame surrounding the illustrations and stretching across the page, as in the Pageant'.¹⁵ In both of

¹³ On fol. 1, a turret has crept into the text space. Another good example occurs on fol. 5, where text has been written around the mainsail on the mast of a ship.

¹⁴ The Beauchamp Pageants are cited as providing accurate depictions of medieval weapons by Graeme Rimer, 'Weapons', in *Blood Red Roses: The Archaeology of a Mass Grave from the Battle of Towton, AD 1461*, ed. by Veronica Fiorato, Anthea Boylston, and Christopher Knüsel (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2000), pp. 119–29 (p. 122, fig. 10.5; p. 123, fig. 10.6; p. 124, fig. 10.11; p. 125, figs 10.12, 10.13; p. 126, fig. 10.15, p. 128, fig. 10.19). In his review of the Sinclair facsimile, Thomas Woodcock, in *Book Collector*, 53 (Winter 2004), 626–28 (p. 627), comments: 'recent scholarship in historiography, chivalry and artistic patronage has made it possible to set the pageant in a wider context whilst detailed studies of medieval dress, armour and customs have illuminated comprehension of the period'. Similar observations have been made about the Rous roll. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 361, quotes J. G. Mann: 'Costume has been rendered with minute attention to detail, and the armour in the College of Arms roll has been described as "our best medieval example of deliberate pictorial archaeology".'

¹⁵ Sinclair, *The Beauchamp Pageant*, p. 9, n. 27, thanks Anne Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs for alerting her to the existence of these manuscripts. Another famous work from the 1490s that effectively employs picture-caption format is Albrecht Dürer's *Apocalypse* (begun in 1496 and

these latter examples, however, the pages have been neatly planned, unlike the Beauchamp Pageants, in which text has been uncomfortably fitted (and in some cases awkwardly crammed) into the space left for it.

In BL Add. 48976, Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, is shown holding the chantry chapel at Guy's Cliff in one arm and young Henry VI in his other (Figure 1).¹⁶ Rous's text explains that the chantry was founded at the instigation of 'a holy anchoras namyd dam Em Rawghtoe dwellyng at all halows in the northestrete of york' so 'that God wold send hym an Eyre male'. In addition to serving as 'maister to kyng herre the syxt in hys tender age' and crowning him 'twies at Westmystre as for kyng of England and at paris for kyng of fraunce', Rous tells us that Earl Richard was known for his jousting, that he was 'capten of cales' (Calais), and that he 'was a knyght of the garter and did gret worsup to the ordre'. His daughter Anne, Countess of Warwick, Rous's patron (Figure 2), is described affectionately and at greater length than many of the other important aristocratic and royal figures in Rous's text. Rous several times calls her a 'goode lady' and mentions with particular fondness her loving, 'fre' speech, her kindness to all regardless of class, her unstinting support of women in childbed, her gracious generosity, and her patience 'in hyr tribulacons'. She was, says Rous, 'euer companable and liberal and in her owne persone semly and bewteus and to all that drew to her ladishup as the dede shewid ful gode and gracious'.¹⁷

published in German and Latin editions in 1498), which has a woodcut image on the recto and a letterpress caption on the verso. The type came from the shop of Dürer's godfather, the printer Anton Koberger, who also published the *Schatzbehalter* of 1493 (*Treasure Box or Shrine of the True Riches of Salvation and Eternal Blessedness*), which was 'Dürer's closest model for the layout of his Apocalypse': Christiane Andersson and Charles Talbot, *From a Mighty Fortress: Prints, Drawings, and Books in the Age of Luther 1483–1546* (Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts, 1983), p. 350. Like the layout of the Beauchamp Pageants, the formats of these two printed works have been seen as idiosyncratic, and in the case of Dürer's book, innovative.

¹⁶ Reproduced in Sinclair, *The Beauchamp Pageant*, plate 1, and described by Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, item 138, p. 360.

¹⁷ BL Add. 48976, figs 50, 56. Compare Pageant XLV (fol. 23) which again shows Beauchamp holding the infant Henry in his arm. According to the caption, Beauchamp was named as 'maister to Kyng Henry the vjth, and so he contynowed til the yong kyng was xvj yere of age, and then first by his greet labour he was discharged'. Sinclair, *The Beauchamp Pageant*, p. 140, points out that Henry V's will in fact named Thomas Beaufort, Duke of Exeter (d. 1426), as his son's guardian. Pageant XLVII also mentions 'Dam Emme Rawhton, Recluse at all halowes in Northgate strete of york' and the founding of Guy's Cliff.

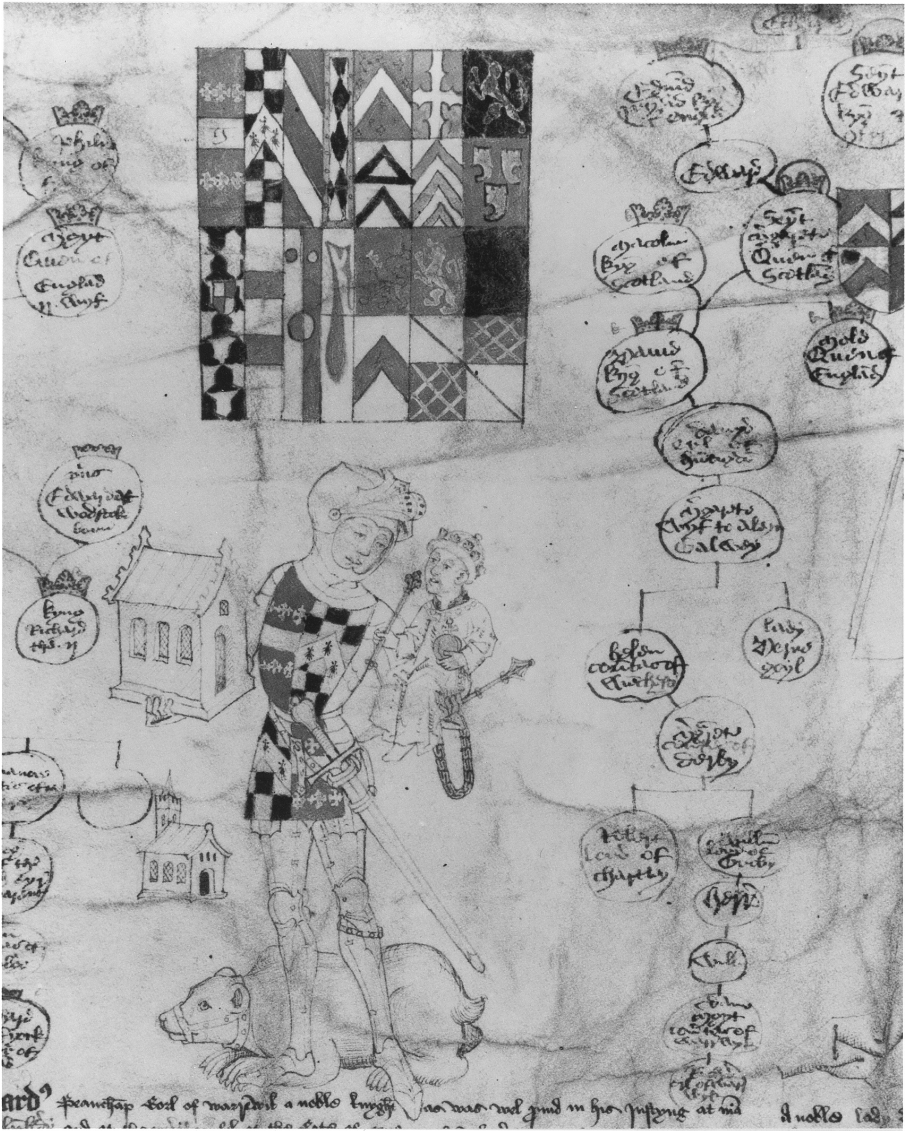


Figure 1. Earl Richard with the infant Henry VI and the chantry chapel at Guy's Cliff. Rous roll, London, British Library, MS Additional 48976, fig. 50. By permission of the British Library. All rights reserved.

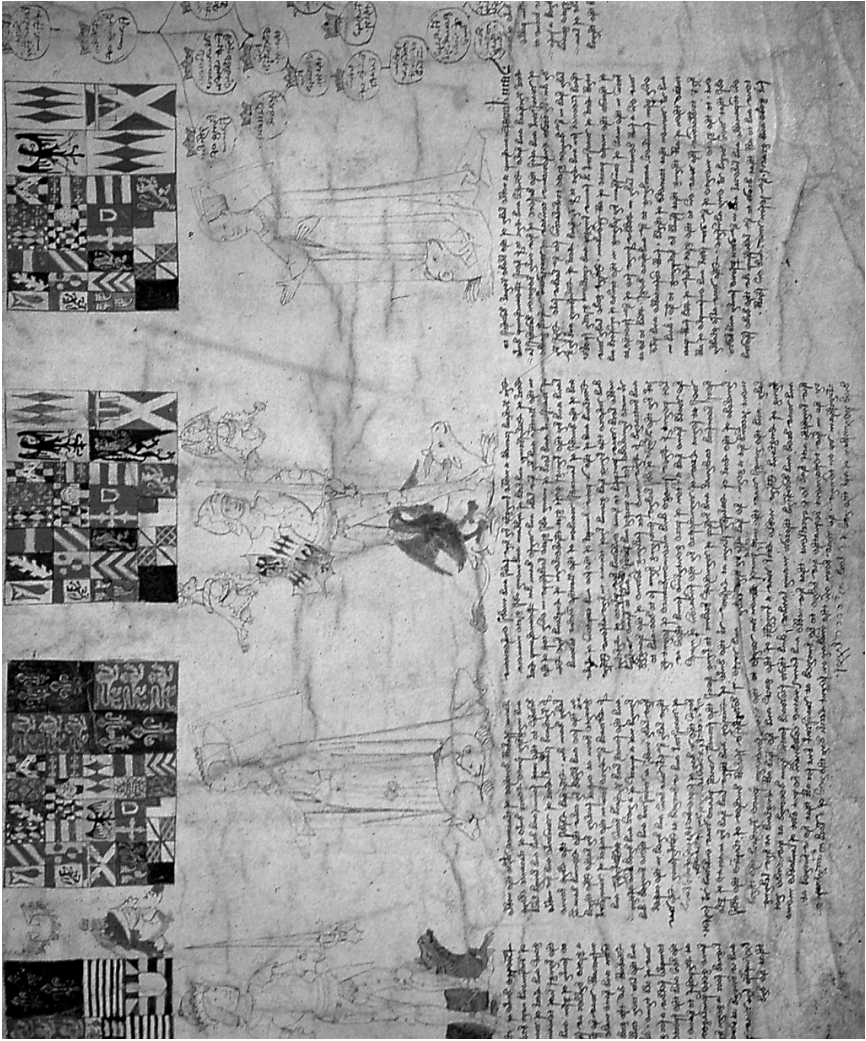


Figure 2. Anne, Countess of Warwick. Rous roll, London, British Library, MS Additional 48976, fig. 56.
By permission of the British Library. All rights reserved.

The text of the Beauchamp Pageants elaborates more fully on the life of Earl Richard, while its patronage by Anne has been suggested by her prominence in the two Beauchamp genealogies (Figure 3) at the end of the volume. Rous has been tied to the composition of the text of the Beauchamp Pageants, which, however, differs from that found in the Rous roll.¹⁸ Whatever their source, however, the text of the Beauchamp Pageants indicates a biographer who knew intimately the details of Earl Richard's career. Of this remarkable book, Martin Lowry has observed that 'the whole process of composition reflects the activity of a sophisticated literary circle, with access to the best artists in the capital and a developed system of contact with the provincial center'.¹⁹

In the Beauchamp Pageants, events in Earl Richard's career are framed so as to identify him with the Lancastrian cause, depicting him as the close comrade of Henry V as well as the famous Captain of Calais and Knight of the Garter.²⁰ In the pageant showing Richard as Captain of Calais, for example (Figure 4), Earl Richard kneels before the King, who sits at left enthroned beneath a canopy. There are ships with detailed prows and rigging at the right, with the familiar bear and staff, the Earl's personal badge, visible on a pennant hung from the topmost mast. Highlights from the Beauchamp Pageants include illustrations of Richard's first battle in 1403 ('the Warre of Wales by oone Owen of Glendour') with a comet (*stella comata*) above; Richard's service 'att the batell of Shrewesbury', fought on 21 July 1403, for which he received the Order of the Garter; his journey

¹⁸ Russell, 'The Rous Roll', p. 24; and Pamela Tudor-Craig, *Richard III, Catalogue of National Portrait Gallery Exhibition* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1973), pp. 48–49, 57–58, both suggest 'Rous was the author, but not the illuminator of the Beauchamp Pageant itself. E. M. Thompson, 'The Pageants of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, Commonly Called the Warwick MS.', *Burlington Magazine*, 1 (1903), 151–64, goes so far as to exclaim: 'With regard to the drawings, their attribution to Rous is altogether impossible' (p. 159). On the content, Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', p. 338, says: 'the narrative captions, with their personal information on Richard's experiences in France, Italy, the Holy Land, and the Empire, must certainly have been drawn on some source very close to the earl — either the childhood memories of his daughter, Rous's notes, or some lost work like the "book of Master John Brewster"'. John Brewster's name occurs on the muster-roll of 1415. He apparently served as an archer with Earl Richard. Lowry, p. 331, comments: 'William Worcester would later quote extensively from "the book of Master John Brewster", which evidently gave numerous details of Earl Richard's building projects as well as his exploits in France.'

¹⁹ Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', p. 338.

²⁰ Payne, 'The Beauchamps and the Nevilles', p. 226; Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', p. 338.

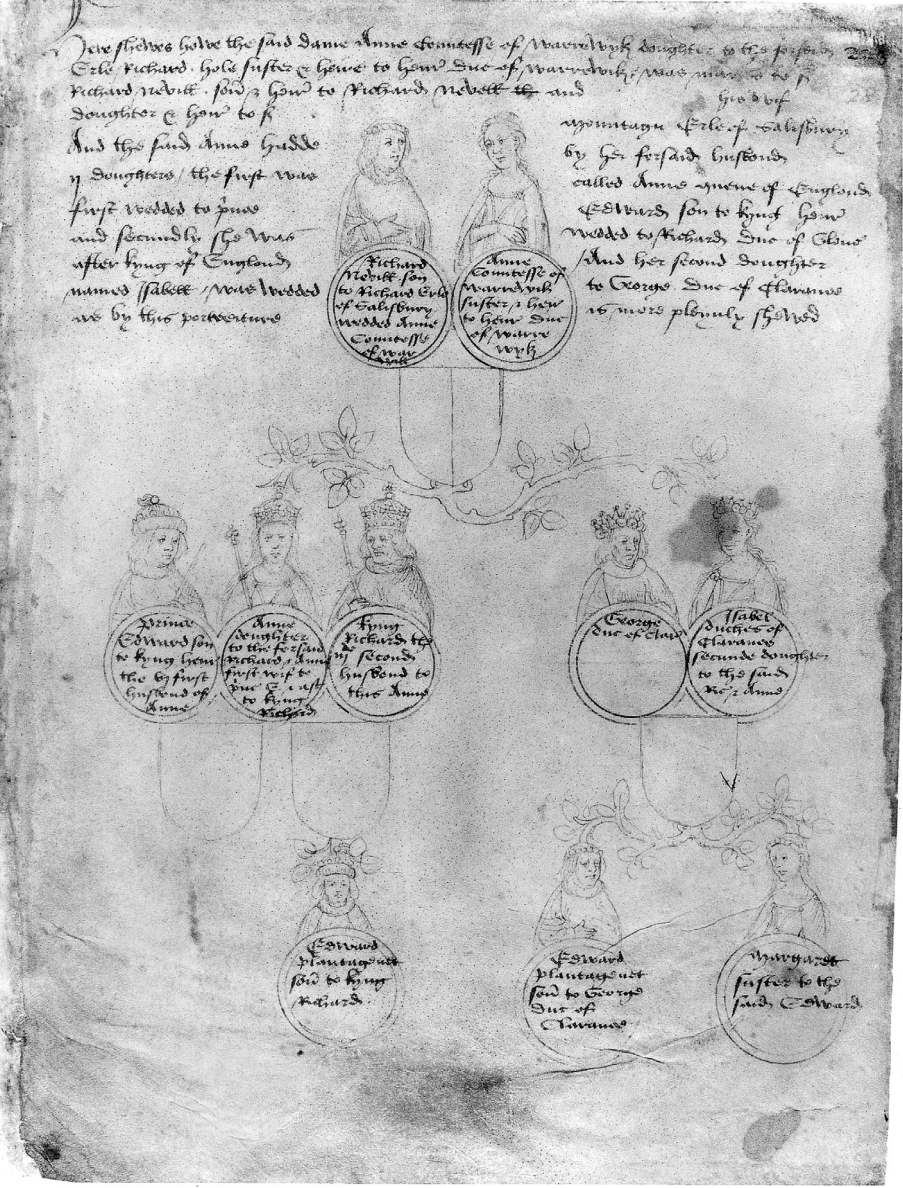


Figure 3. Descendants of Anne, Countess of Warwick. Beauchamp Pageants, London, British Library, Cotton MS Julius E. IV, Article 6, fol. 28.
By permission of the British Library. All rights reserved.



Figure 4. Richard as Captain of Calais. Beauchamp Pageants, London, British Library, Cotton MS Julius E. IV, Article 6, fol. 13. By permission of the British Library. All rights reserved.

to Jerusalem in August 1408 and visit to the Holy Sepulchre; and numerous tournament and jousting scenes. Among these is a drawing of jousters at the coronation of 'Quene Jane', or Joan of Navarre, Duchess of Brittany, who married Henry IV. The King and Queen watch from a gallery above the playing field (Figure 5), resting their arms on pillows. The Queen wears butterfly veils, which are anachronistic; such veils did not come into fashion until the later 1450s and remained popular well into the 1480s, when the Pageants were made.²¹ Earl Richard is shown at the centre of the picture, engaged in the joust with the barrier, or tilt. He is identified by the crest on his helmet of the bear and the ragged staff and is accompanied by his squire, who also wears his badge. It is further interesting to note the large bell adorning the caparison on Earl Richard's horse; bells are shown adorning the tail and trappings of Earl Richard's horse elsewhere in the Pageants (Figure 6) as well.²² In the Beauchamp Pageants, history is presented as a visual narrative in which the various exploits of the historical hero are readily seen through the immediacy of the image. The action is also briefly explained in accompanying captions. The badge and arms of Earl Richard lend further authenticity, allowing the viewer to identify him in each historical scene.

Despite their seeming immediacy, however, the pictures of the Beauchamp Pageants were made some fifty years after the fact. The drawings of the birth of Earl Richard, the marriage of Henry V and Katherine of Valois (Figure 7), and the battles all look to be standard scenes taken from model books or other manuscript exemplars. Earl Richard is known by his personal badge or livery; heraldic insignia function as signs that identify a specific historical person located in a historical past. This use of visual signs to promote the family lineage is further emphasized by the last two pageants in the collection, which show Earl Richard's descendants. In the first of these, Dame Anne, Countess of Warwick, the wife of Richard Neville, appears in the bottom right corner. The final pageant illustrates the descendants of Countess Anne, the probable patron of the Pageants.

Like Anne, several other prominent members of the Beauchamp family understood the value of beautiful books as luxury items and as signifiers of power,

²¹ Carol M. Meale, 'The Morgan Library Copy of *Generides*', in *Romance in England*, ed. by M. Mills, J. Fellows, and C. Meale (Woodbridge: Brewer, 1991), pp. 89–104 (p. 97, n. 35).

²² The Beauchamp crest was a swan's head issuing from a crest coronet; of interest here is the Earl's personal badge of the bear and ragged staff being used as a crest. See Woodcock, review of *The Beauchamp Pageant*, p. 628. Bells are shown on the trappings of horses in Pageants VI (fol. 3^v), XIV (fol. 7^v), XXII (fol. 11^v), XXIX (fol. 15), XXX (fol. 15^v), XXXIV (fol. 17^v), and XLVIII (fol. 24^v).



Figure 5. Jousters at the Coronation of Queen Joan. Beauchamp Pageants, London, British Library, Cotton MS Julius E. IV, Article 6, fol. 3.

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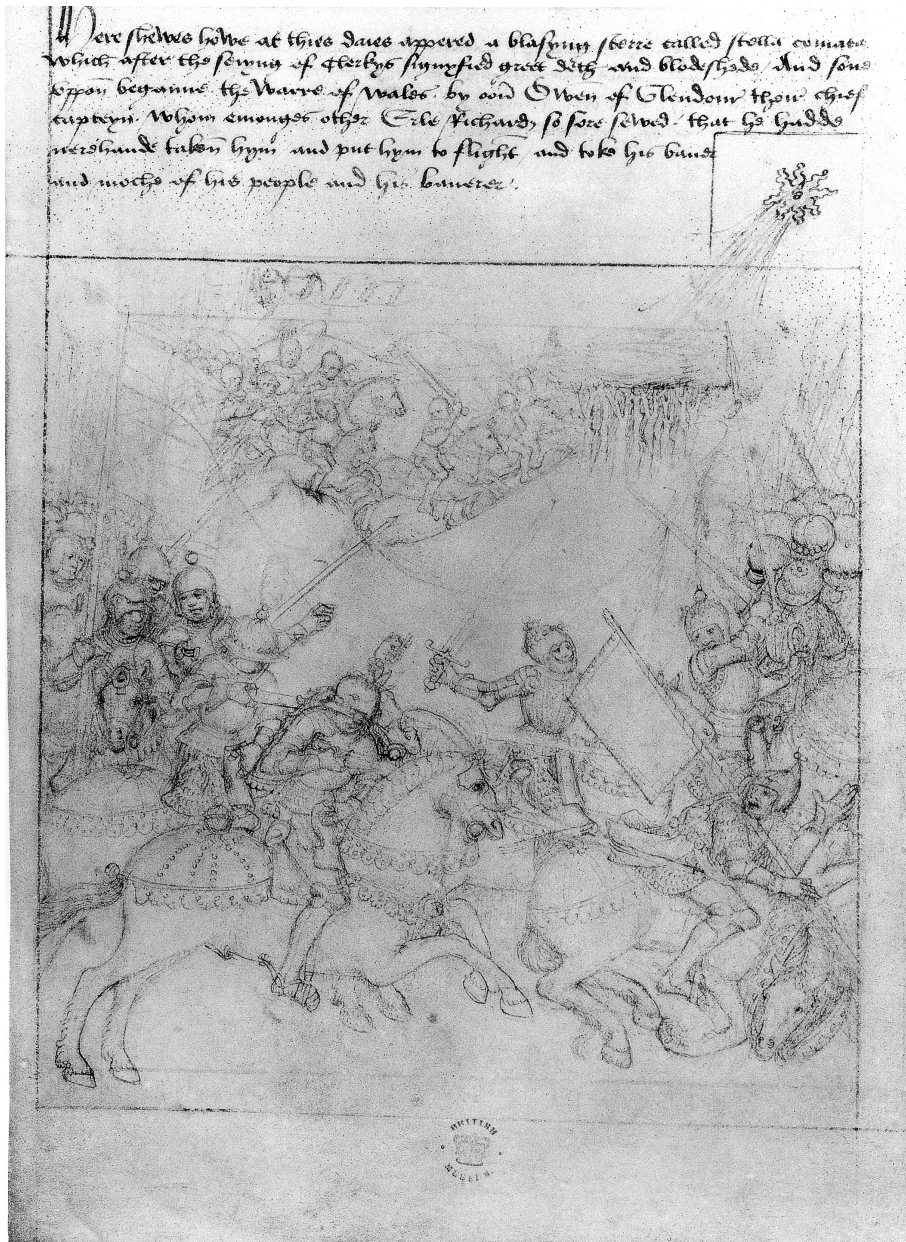


Figure 6. Bells on trappings (and 'stella comata'). Beauchamp Pageants, London, British Library, Cotton MS Julius E. IV, Article 6, fol. 3^v.

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Figure 7. Marriage of Henry V and Katherine of Valois. Beauchamp Pageants, London, British Library, Cotton MS Julius E. IV, Article 6, fol. 22.

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prestige, and social and political connection. Her father, Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, employed the scribe and publisher John Shirley (d. 1456) as a member of his retinue from 1403.²³ Beauchamp also commissioned at least one poem from the Lancastrian court poet John Lydgate in 1427. *The Title and Pedigree of Henry VI*, 'a piece of dynastic propaganda', was Lydgate's translation into English of a verse pedigree tracing Henry VI's claim to the French throne, written originally in French by Lawrence Calot.²⁴ Earl Richard himself wrote poetry to his second wife that is preserved in one of the manuscripts that passed through Shirley's London workshop.²⁵ He further owned a copy of Jean Froissart's poetry and a copy of John Trevisa's translation of Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon*.²⁶

Margaret, the Earl's eldest daughter by his first marriage to Elizabeth Berkeley, who later became the wife of John, Lord Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, commissioned Lydgate to compose a life of Guy of Warwick, her noble (and fictional)

²³ Margaret Connolly, *John Shirley: Book Production and the Noble Household in Fifteenth-Century England* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p. 15. See also Anne F. Sutton and Livia Visser-Fuchs, 'The Provenance of the Manuscript: The Lives and Archive of Sir Thomas Cook and his Man of Affairs, John Vale', in *The Politics of Fifteenth-Century England: John Vale's Book*, ed. by Margaret Kekewich and others (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 73–123 (p. 111), who cite Beauchamp as one of Lydgate's patrons (cf. BL, MS Harley 7333, fol. 31). For more on the books in the Beauchamp circle, see Ryan Perry's essay in this volume.

²⁴ *IMEV* 3808. Derek Pearsall, *Old English and Middle English Poetry* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 232. The poem has been copied into Harley 7333, fols 31'–32'. Connolly, *John Shirley*, p. 91, comments, 'That Shirley was aware of this work and had access to it is apparent from its unique survival in BL Harley 7333, a manuscript which clearly derives from a Shirley exemplar'.

²⁵ *IMEV* 1288. Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', p. 331; Payne, 'The Beauchamps and the Nevilles', p. 220; A. S. G. Edwards, 'John Shirley and the Emulation of Courtly Culture', in *The Court and Cultural Diversity*, ed. by Evelyn Mullally and John Thompson (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), pp. 309–17 (p. 311 and n. 15).

²⁶ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds français 831, discussed by Connolly, *John Shirley*, pp. 94, 115. For more on BL, MS Additional 24194, see *ibid.*, p. 114. Ralph Hanna also cites Bodleian, MS Digby 233, the unique copy of Trevisa's *De regimine principum*, with a copy of John Walton's translation of Vegetius's *De re militari*, as belonging to Beauchamp, though Connolly, p. 115, suggests there may not be enough evidence to support this; Edwards, 'John Shirley and the Emulation of Courtly Culture', p. 310, however, adds this volume to a probable list of books belonging to Beauchamp. Walton's translation may have been commissioned by Beauchamp's first wife, Elizabeth Berkeley. Edwards, p. 310 and n. 10, further cites Beauchamp's ownership of 'some manuscripts of prick-song' described by Andrew Wathey, 'Lost Books of Polyphony in England', *Research Chronicle*, 21 (1988), item 11.

ancestor. Two manuscripts are extant today, written in Shirley's hand, the rubric stating that the poem was translated from the Latin chronicle of Gerard of Cornwall at Margaret's request.²⁷ Margaret may also have owned Bodleian, MS Bodley 686, a fifteenth-century anthology comprising *Canterbury Tales* (*Melibee* and 'The Parson's Tale' are omitted, and a unique, anonymous fifteenth-century revision of 'The Cook's Tale' included) and eleven poems by Lydgate, some of which have 'headings of the Shirley type'.²⁸

Henry Beauchamp (d. 1446) inherited the dukedom at the age of fourteen on the death of his father in Rouen and died seven years later. He was the brother of Anne and, like her, the child of Richard by his second wife, Isabella (the Despenser heir), and he also owned or has been associated with several illuminated rolls and manuscripts. A parchment prayer roll made about 1440 shows Henry kneeling in a historiated initial beneath a miniature of the Crucifixion. The miniatures here have been attributed to the Fastolf Master, who was active in Rouen 'when the Beauchamps were present in that city' (and where Richard Beauchamp died on 30 April 1439).²⁹ Like many artists of the period, the Fastolf Master moved between France and England, illuminating a Book of Hours for Rouen Use probably for Jean Garin, a canon of Rouen Cathedral (and a judge at the trial of Joan of Arc), as well as several books for English patrons, including an Hours for the use of Sarum for Sir William Porter of Lincolnshire, and the *Livre*

²⁷ Harley 7333 and Harvard University Library, MS 530. Velma Bourgeois Richmond, *The Legend of Guy of Warwick* (New York: Garland, 1996), pp. 123–27, supplies some discussion of Lydgate's text, commenting: 'Margaret probably commissioned the poem in the mid-1440s to honor her father, the perfect analogue of Guy of Warwick' (p. 124).

²⁸ John M. Manly and Edith Rickert, *The Text of 'The Canterbury Tales'*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940), pp. 67–68. Given the contents of the manuscript and its ownership inscriptions, Manly and Rickert think Margaret a likely candidate for its patron. For more on the version of 'The Cook's Tale' in Bodley 686, see Helen Cooper, *The Canterbury Tales: Oxford Guides to Chaucer*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 413–14.

²⁹ Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent, MS. ABM h4a, c. 1440. Hugo van der Velden, *Gothic Art for England 1400–1547*, ed. by Richard Marks and Paul Williamson (London: V&A Publications, 2003), item 92, p. 228. The Latin prayer roll (with French rubrics) shows Henry Beauchamp, Duke of Warwick: 'Warwick's identity is established by the inclusion of his Christian name in the final supplication at the end of the prayers to Christ, and by his badge of the ragged staff, with which the piece of cloth over his prie-dieu is decorated. [...] Henry's use of the Warwick badge suggests that the prayer roll was only commissioned after Richard's death in Rouen, in 1439' (p. 228).

des quatre vertus and the *Epître d'Othéa* for Sir John Fastolf (d. 1459) from which he takes his name.³⁰

The 'Warwick Hours', New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 893, a Psalter-Hours illuminated with twenty-two miniatures, was made for Henry (though perhaps commissioned by his father) probably in London at some point before 1446. The manuscript then mysteriously travelled to northern Italy, where the manuscript was completed about 1482, and five further miniatures were added. Henry's partially erased signature ('Warrewyk'), along with motto ('Deserving causyth'), occurs on folio 12 of the manuscript. The illumination of this fabulous Psalter-Hours has been attributed by Jonathan Alexander to the London illuminator William Abell, though Kathleen Scott has disputed this and has identified two hands at work in the miniatures.³¹ Scott has speculated further that the miniature of the Mass of St Gregory miniature (Figure 8) 'may contain a male patron-figure together with a second youthful figure, possibly father and son', from which we might surmise that Richard and Henry were perhaps intended.³² In his roll, Rous reveals that Henry was particularly pious: 'he wold every day be shryve and dayle sey the hole daued sawter', or recite the psalter, which Henry wholly memorized. Another extant psalter was probably also owned by him.³³

³⁰ New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MSS M. 27 and M. 105 and Bodleian, MS Laud Misc. 570. Descriptions of illuminations in Morgan M. 105 are in Martha Driver and Michael Orr, Fascicle Four, *New York City, Columbia University–Union Theological: An Index of Images in English Manuscripts from the Time of Chaucer to Henry VIII c 1380 – c 1509* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 70–73.

³¹ J. J. G. Alexander, 'William Abell "lymnour" and 15th-Century English Illumination', in *Kunsthistorische Forschungen Otto Pächt zu seinem 70. Geburtstag*, ed. by Artur Rosenauer and Gerold Weber (Vienna: Residenz Verlag, 1972), pp. 166–72 (pp. 166, 172, fig. 5). The Italian miniatures on fols 236 and 244^v are attributed by Alexander to Tommaso da Modena, the rest to two other Italian masters. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 248–51. Scott's observations accord with those of the earlier Morgan cataloguer, who attributes ten of the miniatures to an unidentified master and the other twelve to a less refined artist, and who says: 'The style of the miniatures and their borders suggest a date not long after the Hours of Elizabeth the Queen, which has most recently been dated about 1420 and 1430.' Scott, II, 250, states that Illustrator A in Morgan M. 893 also contributed the miniature of Chaucer in the historiated initial opening the text of Bodley 686. Described in Driver and Orr, *Index of Images*, pp. 57–58.

³² Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 250.

³³ Edwards, 'John Shirley and the Emulation of Courtly Culture', p. 311 n. 13, cites MS Garrett 34, now in the Johns Hopkins Library, as belonging to Henry. Edwards has further found the name 'Beauchamp' inscribed in a fifteenth-century hand in Harvard Law School, MS 21 (*Statuta Parliamentorum*).



Figure 8. Mass of St Gregory. Warwick Hours, New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 893, fol. 106. By permission of The Morgan Library.

An inscription in the de luxe 'Hours of Elizabeth the Queen' asks for prayers for the soul of Cecily Neville, sister of "the Kingmaker" and wife of Henry Beauchamp and, after his death in 1446, of John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester (d. 1470). Janet Backhouse points out that Henry's wife 'was too young to have been the original owner of the manuscript, but a book so grand could well have been commissioned within the Beauchamp and Neville family circles'.³⁴ This manuscript is illustrated with eighteen large miniatures, four smaller miniatures illustrating extracts from the Gospels, and over four hundred historiated initials. The majority of miniatures seem to have been executed by an illuminator with 'affinities with contemporary Franco-Flemish styles'.³⁵

Among other important books made for members of the Beauchamp circle are the Books of Hours of John Talbot and Margaret Beauchamp, Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury, two companion manuscripts written and illuminated in Rouen in 1444 or 1445. Both books contain miniatures of the Virgin and Child with 'the earl in a tabard of Talbot arms, with his countess', whom he married as his second wife in 1425. Lydgate's prayer to St Alban, a Lancastrian saint and of special importance to Margaret's father, Earl Richard, has been added to one of the manuscripts.³⁶

Finally, in addition to her probable patronage of the Rous rolls and Beauchamp Pageants, Anne herself has sometimes been associated with the de luxe *Troilus* manuscript copied in the first quarter of the fifteenth century and prefaced by the famous full-page miniature of Chaucer reciting to a courtly company.³⁷ The manuscript contains a couplet written by John Shirley on folio 1 that is found also in other manuscripts known to have passed through Shirley's hands, and on folio 101^v is a notation in plummet in a fifteenth-century hand,

³⁴ BL, MS Additional 50001, described in *Gothic Art*, ed. by Marks and Williamson, by Janet Backhouse, item 93, p. 229. Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', pp. 329, 335, notes that in the *Historia*, Rous claims to have been a student at Oxford with John Tiptoft.

³⁵ Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 171–76.

³⁶ Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 40-1950, MS 41-1950. Janet Backhouse and Ann Payne, in *Gothic Art*, ed. by Marks and Williamson, item 94, pp. 230–31.

³⁷ CCCC, MS 61. For a complete description, see *Troilus and Criseyde: A Facsimile of Corpus Christi College Cambridge MS 61*, ed. by Malcolm Parkes and Elizabeth Salter (Cambridge: Brewer, 1978). This manuscript is also described in Martha Driver, 'The Early Editions of Chaucer's *Troilus*' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1980), pp. 41–97.

'neuer Foryeteth Anne neuill'.³⁸ Among the several fifteenth-century Annes to whom this inscription might refer, Malcolm Parkes suggests, because of the manuscript's connection with Shirley, that this may be 'Anne, the daughter of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, who was Shirley's chief patron'.³⁹ Connolly has more recently pointed out that after her husband's death in 1471, 'Anne herself was kept in custody and excluded from her possessions, and her estates were not restored to her until 1487. The plaintive tone of the inscription [...] accords well with this reading of events'.⁴⁰

This brief summary description of some of the important manuscripts circulating among (or made explicitly for) members of the Beauchamp and Neville families suggests a highly developed intellectual network, tied further by blood, of male and female readers who appreciated both secular and religious books. Further, the family was able to maintain connections with scribes, such as John Shirley in London, and artists, such as the Fastolf Master in Rouen, as well as employing historians at home, including John Rous and perhaps the more mysterious John Brewster.⁴¹ This wide range of connections that allowed the

³⁸ There are actually two couplets on fol. 1; the first is used by Shirley as an *ex libris*: 'Lord god preserv vnder þy mighty handes | Our kyng oure qwene . þeyre pepul . and þeyre landes.' The second threatens: 'he that thys Boke renttes or stelles | god send hym sekenysse svart of helle' (Driver, 'Early Editions of Chaucer's *Troilus*', p. 86). The Shirley couplet appears also in Cambridge, Trinity College, MS Royal II. 20 and San Marino, Huntington Library, MS EL 26. A. 13 (Driver, 'Early Editions of Chaucer's *Troilus*', p. 81).

³⁹ Malcolm Parkes, 'Palaeographical Description and Commentary', in *Troilus and Criseyde*, ed. by Parkes and Salter, p. 12. Aage Brusendorff, *The Chaucer Tradition* (London: Humphrey Milford, 1925), p. 23, and Elizabeth Salter, 'The "Troilus" Frontispiece', in *Troilus and Criseyde*, ed. by Parkes and Salter, p. 23 and n. 30, both suggest another possible candidate: Anne Neville, Duchess of Buckingham, a contemporary and well-known medieval owner of books. See also *Women and Literature in Britain 1150–1500*, ed. by Carol M. Meale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 136, 137, 142, 155.

⁴⁰ Connolly, *John Shirley*, p. 110. Connolly is following Parkes, 'Palaeographical Description', who further comments, p. 12, n. 36, that 'Dr Scott's hypothesis [put forward in *Caxton Master and his Patrons*, cited here in note 1 above] that the Beauchamp Pageants was commissioned by Anne Nevill [*sic*] to draw attention to her neglected situation is attractively relevant to the wording of the note in the Corpus manuscript'. See Scott, *Caxton Master and his Patrons*, pp. 61–65.

⁴¹ The lost writings of John Brewster are described by Michael Hicks, *Warwick the Kingmaker* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), p. 58: 'Besides his master's achievements in war and peace, Brewster recorded his building works at Warwick, at Hanley and Elmley Castles (Worcs.), at Drayton Bassett (Staffs.), Baginton, Sutton Coldfield and Berkeswell (Warwicks.), at Caversham (Berks.)

family to commission beautiful books may also have been exploited later under less fortunate circumstances in the making of the Rous rolls and the Beauchamp Pageants.

The scribe John Shirley serves as one 'telling witness to the literary patronage of the Beauchamps',⁴² but what of his successors? Both of the Rous rolls are sometimes said to have been copied in their entirety by John Rous himself, but a more likely possibility, suggested by C. E. Wright in the 1950s, is that Rous copied the Latin roll, which is written in one hand, but that he served mainly as the corrector (Hand C) in the English version, which shows evidence of having been copied by three scribes:

The character of the corrections and additions suggests that the text was written by a scribe not from dictation but with copy before him and that this copy had gaps and sometimes illegible words; for example, there was no text for the first figure of Richard III, which is supplied entirely in the hand of C, who has revised the whole text, filling in omitted names, words, or phrases, and has sometimes made considerable additions.⁴³

In her description, Scott is even more cautious, stating that the chronicle rolls were 'composed by and perhaps executed under the direction of John Rous' and further, 'The claim made on the dorse [of BL Add. 48976] that "This rol was laburd & finishid by Master John Rows of Warrewyk" does not necessarily indicate that Rous performed all of the tasks necessary to produce the roll'.⁴⁴ The scribal hands that produced the Rous rolls are not the same as that supplying the captions in the Beauchamp Pageants, which shows a more pronounced influence of Secretary letter forms. The legends in the Pageants have been written in one hand that more closely resembles the script of a document letter (Figures 9, 10) from Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, the husband of Anne, to John Paston. The letter asks Paston to show 'tender fren[d]shep' to 'the freres menoures of the conuent of Norwich' and is dated only 1 March. Curt Bühler suggested that the

and at Hanslope (Bucks.). Brewster's son was still living in his father's rent-free cottage at Warwick in 1449, presumably with John Brewster's book.' See also note 18 above.

⁴² Payne, 'The Beauchamps and the Nevilles', p. 220; Connolly, *John Shirley*, pp. 10–26, passim.

⁴³ C. E. Wright, 'The Rous Roll: The English Version', *British Museum Quarterly*, 20 (1956), 77–81 (p. 79).

⁴⁴ Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 360, 361. Scott says the British Library cataloguer cites 'at least three scribal hands' in BL Add. 48976 (p. 361). Both the British Library cataloguer and Wright, 'Rous Roll: The English Version', p. 79, believe the third scribal hand is that of John Rous and that it is also his hand that has copied the entire College of Arms roll.

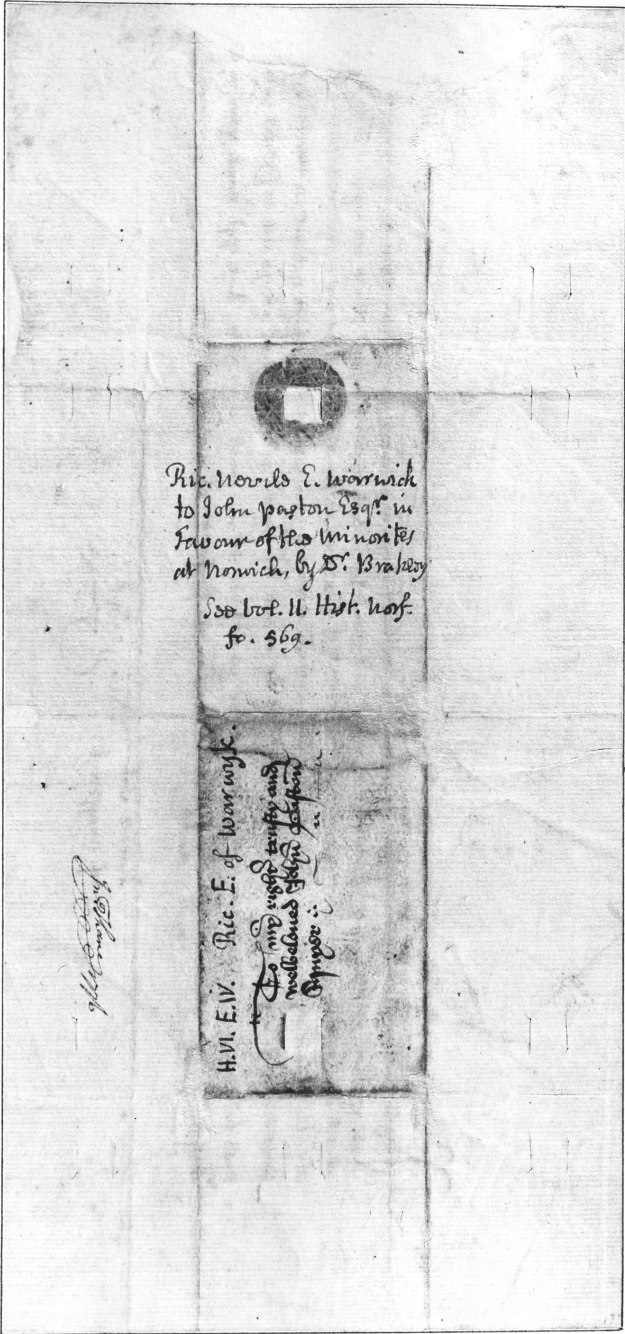


Figure 10. 'To my right trusty . . .' Address to John Paston in hand of scribe (verso). Rulers of England (Henry VI), New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, Box 01, no. 11. By permission of The Morgan Library.

letter must have been written perhaps about 1454 or 1455 and certainly 'on some March 1 following the accession of Richard Neville to the Earldom of Warwick (23 July 1449) and before the death of John Paston in May 1466'.⁴⁵ The hand of the scribe writing for the Kingmaker shares several discernible features with that of the Pageants, including the flourished capitals, the mixing of long and short *r* and the use of backwards *e*.⁴⁶ The letter further reminds us that scribes were employed within Anne's household just as Shirley had been in her father's, and one of these most likely produced the written text of the Beauchamp Pageants.

The Rous rolls and the Pageants are illustrated with line drawings in pen and wash that 'fit closely into the newly-revived tradition of English line-drawing to be found elsewhere in contemporary or near-contemporary examples in Thomas Chaundler's *Life of Waynflete* (1457–61), [and] the grisaille wall-paintings at Eton (1479–88)'.⁴⁷ Wright further mentions a related drawing 'showing Lydgate offering his poem, "The Pilgrim", to Thomas Montacute, Earl of Salisbury, which is preserved in Harley MS. 4826 (f.1)'.⁴⁸ While there are contemporary works in the same media that resemble the drawings in the Rous rolls and the Beauchamp Pageants, no exact source has been found.

The drawings in both Rous rolls are similar to one another, and the artist has been variously described. Some scholars tend to think that the Latin text was not only written but illustrated by Rous himself, while the artist of the English roll has been vaguely identified as a Fleming (possibly) who most likely knew the drawings

⁴⁵ Curt F. Bühler, 'Some New Paston Documents', *Review of English Studies*, 54 (1938), 129–42 (p. 135). Seymour de Ricci, *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*, vol. II (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1937), p. 1608; and C. U. Faye and W. H. Bond, *Supplement to the Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* (New York: Bibliographical Society of America, 1962), p. 385.

⁴⁶ It is within the realm of possibility that the titles for the Beauchamp Pageants and the letter were written by the same household scribe. The difficulties of accurately identifying scribal hands on a small sample such as the letter are well illustrated in Malcolm Parkes, *English Cursive Book Hands 1250–1500* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 21, plates i–iii. These are three variations of the same scribal hand in London, Society of Actuaries, MS 223, a copy of the *Brut*, showing a scribe's use of calligraphic Secretary book hand, then Secretary mixed with Anglicana, then late-fifteenth-century Anglicana in the same volume.

⁴⁷ John Rous, *The Rous Roll*, ed. by Charles Ross (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1980), p. vi. Wright, 'Rous Roll: The English Version', p. 80, notes the shelfmark of Chaundler's works (Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R. 14. 15), dating it to between 1457 and 1461, and attributes the grisaille wall-paintings at Eton possibly to William Baker, dating these to between 1479 and 1488. See also Sinclair, *The Beauchamp Pageant*, p. 2, plate 2, p. 3.

⁴⁸ Wright, 'Rous Roll: The English Version', p. 80.

in the Beauchamp Pageants.⁴⁹ Scott describes the illustrator of BL Add. 48976 as 'an accomplished professional artist' who seems also to have supplied some of the figures of the Rous roll in the College of Arms 'at a different period', including the portrait of Rous on the verso. She further detects in the Latin roll 'a weaker hand, an artist who drew less substantial figures with less fine detail but more colouring'.⁵⁰ Both of these, Scott suggests, were insular artists, and indeed, the drawings of the Rous rolls look to be local or could be local to a West Midlands production.

While the artist or artists of the Rous rolls may be local, it is not entirely clear that the same is true of the artist of the Beauchamp Pageants. As we have seen, physical evidence seems to suggest that the drawings were made prior to the writing of the captions, which could further imply that the drawings were made (using detailed instructions) elsewhere. Writing in 1976, Scott identified the artist of the Beauchamp Pageants as the Caxton Master, an identification that has lately been called into question. According to Scott, this artist was trained abroad, possibly in Utrecht, and contributed drawings to at least four English manuscripts: Caxton's translation of Ovid, the *Mirrore of the Worlde*, the Ceremony of Knighthood of the Bath, and the Beauchamp Pageants.⁵¹ The invention of the Caxton Master is ingenious and useful as shorthand when describing the illustration of these manuscripts, but the question remains, is it valid? Martin Lowry has commented:

The identity of the illustrator of the Pepysian Ovid with that of the Beauchamp Pageants is not unchallengeable, and even if we do accept it, there is no way of knowing how the artist had been rated in the Low Countries since no work earlier than the Ovid has yet been attributed to him.⁵²

⁴⁹ Thompson, 'Pageants of Richard Beauchamp', p. 160. Rous, *The Rous Roll*, ed. by Ross, p. vi.

⁵⁰ Reproduced in Driver and Orr, *Index of Images*, fig. 7, p. 166 (described pp. 38–39). Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 361. Certain elements of style in the Rous roll drawings are shared with those that occur in phlebotomy and zodiac charts made in the later fifteenth century in England. Glazier 47 in the Morgan Library, a physician's folding almanac in Latin, made about 1464, for example, has two pen-and-ink drawings which resemble the Rous drawings. This manuscript is described more fully in *The Twenty-First Report to the Fellows of The Pierpont Morgan Library 1984–1986*, ed. by Charles Ryskamp (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1989), p. 85.

⁵¹ Scott, *Caxton Master and his Patrons*, pp. 1–71. Much of Scott's research in this volume is still groundbreaking and useful, however, particularly her description of *Writhe's Garter Book*.

⁵² Martin Lowry, 'Sister or Country Cousin? The Huntington *Recuyell* and the Getty *Tondal*', in *Margaret of York, Simon Marmion, and 'The Visions of Tondal'*, ed. by Thomas Kren (Malibu: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1992), pp. 103–10 (pp. 107–08).

Sinclair points out that the Pageants artist

has never been identified. Kathleen Scott, in her study of a group of contemporary drawings in the same medium and of a similar style, equates him with the artist who illustrated William Caxton's translations of the *Metamorphoses of Ovid* and the *Mirrore of the Worlde*, whom she names the Caxton Master. The attribution of these illustrations to the same hand has been questioned.⁵³

Given the layout of the Beauchamp Pageants, with the pictures executed first, the script later, the manuscript was clearly produced in two stages. The detail of the drawings and the specificity of the captions suggest, however, that those two stages may have been only as far apart as London and Guy's Cliff, or the distance between the artist and John Rous (or another family historian). Let us turn first to a reconsideration of the medium of the Beauchamp Pageants — the drawings themselves.

The Pageants drawings are said to be like drawings in other books, though their direct similarity, whether to the illustrations in Caxton's *Ovid*, *The Mirrore of the Worlde*, or *Writhe's Garter Book*, is not immediately apparent. Shared details of costume, gesture, and sometimes household furnishing might possibly suggest a common source, but this source has not been generally agreed upon. Perhaps we might look beyond book illustration to another possible purpose for the Pageants. At the turn of the last century, Thompson proposed that 'Fine as they are, the drawings are sketches rather than finished works. [...] We regard the series as designs for some larger work: an illuminated MS., a set of panel paintings, or tapestries',⁵⁴ a notion that was later called into question by Scott, Backhouse, and others. Echoing these scholars, Sinclair most recently comments: 'the outstanding quality of the draughtsmanship argues against the suggestion, made in the past, that the drawings were produced merely as designs for a more sumptuous work such as an illuminated manuscript or a set of tapestries'.⁵⁵ It may, however,

⁵³ Sinclair, *The Beauchamp Pageant*, p. 6.

⁵⁴ Thompson, 'Pageants of Richard Beauchamp', p. 160. See also Scott, *Caxton Master and his Patrons*, p. 65, who asks: 'Were [the drawings] an end in themselves (as I have suggested), or could they be sketches for another medium?' Edwards, 'Middle English Pageant "Picture"?', p. 25, cites the primary contemporary usage of the term 'pageants' as referring to tapestry. Burne-Jones, whose efforts to emulate actual medieval practice are well known, would later effectively combine fairly lengthy texts with his narrative tapestries. See Helen Proctor, *The Holy Grail Tapestries* (Birmingham: Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery, 1997), pp. 23–28.

⁵⁵ Sinclair, *The Beauchamp Pageant*, pp. 1–2. See also Janet Backhouse, 'The Caxton Master and his patrons by K. L. Scott', *Medium Ævum*, 47 (1978), 201–05 (pp. 204–05). Scott, in both

be time to revisit Thompson's original observation: the Pageants drawings, as finished as they may seem to be, might have been originally intended to be cartoons in the older sense of underdrawing for a series of paintings or possibly tapestries.

Scholars of Flemish and Netherlandish painters, with whom the Pageants artist is stylistically allied, generally agree that drawings on single sheets or in sketch-books are preparatory, in other words, that they do not represent the finished work. Georg Zeman and Fritz Koreny have remarked: 'nothing indicates that one would have considered the drawing, not to mention the draughtman's sketch, as an artistic form of expression before the 16th century', while Maryan Ainsworth has commented even more directly that 'the drawings of this period were not conceived as autonomous works of art, but as aides-mémoires for use in the production of paintings', and there are plenty of examples to support this assertion.⁵⁶

Caxton Master and his Patrons, pp. 64–65, and *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 356–58, suggests that the Pageant drawings were not preliminary to another work of art.

⁵⁶ Fritz Koreny and others, *Early Netherlandish Drawings from Jan Van Eyck to Hieronymus Bosch* (Antwerp: Rubenshuis, 2002), p. 40. Maryan W. Ainsworth, *Gerard David: Purity of Vision in an Age of Transition* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998), p. 7. Drawings with wash of battle scenes are, however, frequently found in incunables. See Gregory T. Clark, *Made in Flanders: The Master of the Ghent Privileges and Manuscript Painting in the Southern Netherlands in the Time of Philip the Good* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), pp. 211, 240, 241. Georges Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Paintings in the 15th and 16th Centuries* (Amsterdam: B. M. Israël, 1987), p. 71, reproduces a drawing by Jan de Tavernier of merchants before a city gate and David Aubert presenting his book to Philip the Good (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, MS 9066, fol. 11^r, fig. 33). The Bible was another book where pen-and-ink drawings appear. The History Bible illustrated by, among others, the Master of Catherine of Cleves in about 1439 (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS CGm. 1102) has 117 pen drawings (some coloured with wash); another copy of the History Bible illustrated by the Master of Catherine of Cleves and others (BL, MS Additional 15410) is cited by James H. Marrow, *The Golden Age of Dutch Manuscript Painting* (New York: George Braziller, 1990), p. 139. See also Sandra Hindman, *Text and Image in Fifteenth-Century Illustrated Dutch Bibles* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1977), plate 17; and L. M. J. Delaissé, *A Century of Dutch Manuscript Illumination*, California Studies in the History of Art, 5 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), plates 45, 46, pp. 41–48. Marrow, item 79, p. 239, further cites the *Historie van Jason/Dat Scaecspel*, copied c. 1475–80 (BL, MS Additional 10290), with '20 lively half-page pen-and-wash drawings', made in Haarlem and later used as a copytext for the edition printed by Jacob Bellaert. Eberhard König, 'How Did Illuminators Draw? Some Fifteenth-Century Examples, Mostly Flemish', *Master Drawings, Early Netherlandish Drawing*, 41 (2003), 216–27 (p. 219), has commented: 'early books offer the richest material demonstrating different stages of completion. [...] Even in its completed state, the manuscript illumination visualizes a variety of forms in diverse techniques.' It remains unclear to me, however, whether the Pageants were intended as a picture book or as designs for a larger project.

One famous instance is Jan van Eyck's partly finished drawing of St Barbara (Figure 11), made in 1437, which represents 'a transitional stage in the artistic process of creation'.⁵⁷ In another case, cited by Ainsworth, the painter Gerard David was involved in litigation with a journeyman painter from Lombardy over the ownership of two trunks which contained, among other items, a sketchbook and 'diverse patterns' which could be exchanged 'through borrowing or renting'.⁵⁸ David's working method when composing his paintings was to make preliminary drawings and then to use a form of pattern transfer that is often no longer visible. Many of the underdrawings, some of which provide 'evidence of lost cartoons used for the transfer of motifs or compositions', have now been recovered through X-radiography, infrared reflectography, and dendrochronology.⁵⁹ It remains possible that the Beauchamp Pageants may have served as preliminary sketches for a work that was never completed.

Drawings and paintings, whether on canvas, wood, or vellum, are also notoriously difficult to compare, as various qualities are lost (or gained) in translation in the transfer of media. Celebrated for his grisaille illustrations in several manuscripts, among them the *Chroniques et conquêtes de Charlemagne* (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, MSS 9066–68), Jan de Tavernier, for example, an artist who worked in Tournay and Gent in the mid-fifteenth century, was said also to have supplied miniatures in manuscripts. However, just which miniatures these are has been debated, and there is 'much less unanimity among art historians concerning manuscripts with coloured miniatures possibly by Tavernier'.⁶⁰ We

⁵⁷ Koreny, *Early Netherlandish Drawings*, p. 42. König, 'How Did Illuminators Draw?', p. 217, cites both Van Eyck's *Portrait of a Cardinal* and 'the small, tablet-sized signed and dated (1437) *St. Barbara*', neither of which 'can be regarded as autonomous drawings in the modern sense'.

⁵⁸ Ainsworth, *Gerard David*, p. 7. See also Maryan W. Ainsworth, "'Diverse patterns pertaining to the crafts of painters or illuminators": Gerard David and the Bening Workshop', *Master Drawings, Early Netherlandish Drawing*, 41 (2003), 240–65 (p. 256), where she suggests, 'The disputed trunks, then could have held a variety of pattern drawings used in the crafts of panel painters or illuminators.'

⁵⁹ Ainsworth, *Gerard David*, p. 4, p. 292, p. 47. See also J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer, 'On the Technique of Two Lesser-Known Paintings of the Petrus Christus Group: The Amsterdam Virgin and Child with Saints and the Turin Madonna and Child', in *Petrus Christus in Renaissance Bruges: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, ed. by Maryan W. Ainsworth (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, in collaboration with Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), pp. 123–28, figs 2, 3, 4, 6. These techniques of viewing underdrawings are described at some length by Lorne Campbell, *The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Schools* (London: National Gallery, 1998).

⁶⁰ Dogaer, *Flemish Miniature Paintings*, p. 72.



Figure 11. St Barbara. Jan van Eyck, 1437. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Inv. 410.
By permission of the Koninklijk Museum.

notice this difficulty even when looking at the preparatory drawings for miniatures in cases where we have both. The Master of the Dresden Prayerbook, who was active in Bruges from about 1470 to 1500 and primarily illuminated Books of Hours, has supplied several fine miniatures but has further left some unfinished drawings in a copy of the *City of Ladies* by Christine de Pizan in Dutch (*Die Lof der Vrouwen*), written in 1475.⁶¹ The underdrawings look very different from the finished illumination, and some are seemingly not even drawn by the Master himself.

The drawings in the Dutch version of Christine are not as finished as those in the Pageants, though several of the figural 'tics' of the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook also appear there (Figures 12, 13), particularly the upturned, foreshortened faces, the three-quarter profiles, and the rather elongated faces of the women with their high foreheads.⁶² Another artist working in about the same

⁶¹ BL, MS Additional 20698. Bodo Brinkmann, *Die Flämische Buchmalerei Am Ende des Burgunderreichs Die Meister des Dresdener Gebetbuchs und die Miniaturisten seiner Zeit*, ed. by Maryan W. Ainsworth and Eberhard König, 2 vols, ARS NOVA Studies in Late Medieval and Renaissance Northern Painting and Illumination (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), reproduces some of these, plates 71–74. Unfinished drawings appear in the manuscript; for example, on fol. 12^v, two ladies with outline in ink and blue-wash background; fol. 35^v, woman holding infant facing several soldiers; fol. 41, Semiramis, ink with blue wash; fol. 45^v, pen and ink partially coloured drawing of woman receiving message from male messenger, with plants in the courtyard that resemble those in woodcuts; fol. 51^v, Penthesilea leading troops, her face (rather disturbingly) whited over. The colouring was done after the copying of the manuscript, as indicated by careful shading around the cadels of the initial V that begins this chapter. Blanks for pictures never executed appear throughout (fols 55^v, 58^v, 61^v, 66^v, 67, 76^v). Towards the end of the volume, from fol. 254, blanks are left for unfinished initials as well as for miniatures. Other pictures are fully finished, for example, the scene of Arachne (fol. 90).

⁶² I have compared a number of works by the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook in the Morgan Library (MSS M. 74, M. 1077), the Bodleian Library (MSS Douce 223, Douce 381, Douce 112), and the British Library (MSS Additional 18851, Additional 20698, Additional 38126). In Morgan M. 74, fol. 50^v, the facial features and the tipped-back heads are similar to those in the Beauchamp Pageants. The hat with a rolled brim worn by one of the shepherds is also seen in several Pageants drawings. In a miniature of Saint Anne reading with Virgin and Child (fol. 163^v), the crown of the Virgin resembles the coronets worn by female figures in the genealogical pictures in the Beauchamp Pageants. The full lower lip and wispy tendrils of hair along the hairline of Christ as Salvator Mundi (fol. 173^v) are also details seen in the Pageants drawings. See also Thomas Kren, ed., *Renaissance Painting in Manuscripts: Treasures from The British Library* (New York: Hudson Hills Press, 1983), pp. 6, 10–11, 33, 40–42, 45, 60–62; Thomas Kren and Scot McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003), pp. 123–24, 207–12,

period as the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook and the Pageants artist (and who may be as obscure) is the Master of the Death of Absalom. His drawing of St George and the dragon includes a very detailed rendering of armour, and like the horses in the Beauchamp Pageants, St George's horse is adorned with bells. Two large bells adorn the strap that runs along the horse's back and under his tail.⁶³ But these artists are not the same, nor has the Pageants artist yet been convincingly identified with other known illuminators.

Ironically, however, we know more about named artists employed by the Warwick household than we do about their scribes after Shirley. In the seventeenth century William Dugdale described a 'Painters Bill' drawn up by William Seyburgh, 'Citizen and Painter of London', delivered to a London tailor for the making of painted cloth items, including small pennons, coats for heralds, banners (some for trumpets), and pennants to be designed with the emblems of Warwick, most especially the personal badge of the 'Raggedstaff'.⁶⁴ Dugdale further describes the building of the Beauchamp Chapel, in the collegiate church of St Mary, Warwick, made, like the Pageants, to memorialize Earl Richard. Constructed four years after his death, the Beauchamp Chapel was consecrated in 1475. Its construction employed a number of artisans, including John Massingham, a leading English sculptor:

In 1449 he worked on the effigy of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, for his burial chapel at St Mary's Warwick, probably carving the wooden model from which the gilt-latten figure was cast. It has been conjectured that he made some of the extant freestone imagery for the east window of the chapel, and that he also produced imagery for the

274–75. For newly discovered illuminations by the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook, see Martha Driver, 'Picturing the Apocalypse in the Printed Book of Hours', in *Prophecy, Apocalypse and the Day of Doom, Proceedings of the 2000 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. by Nigel Morgan, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 12 (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 2004), pp. 52–67.

⁶³ Master of the Death of Absalom, *St George*, Pierpont Morgan Library, Drawings Department (box D15.1–16.1), roundel drawing in green gouache, ink. George's armour is very detailed, with a star spur visible below the horse's side. George wears a helmet similar to those seen in the Pageants. A praying maiden with a lamb is visible on the right hillside beyond, and a castle on a cliff at left. For more on the Master of the Death of Absalom, see Stephanie Buck, 'The Impact of Hugo van der Goes as a Draftsman', *Master Drawings, Early Netherlandish Drawing*, 41 (2003), 236–37. Compare also Morgan M. 74, fol. 196, *St George and the Dragon*, in which George's horse is caparisoned, his mouth opened, his ears pricked, and his forelegs off the ground.

⁶⁴ William Dugdale, *The Baronage of England*, 3 vols (London, 1675–76), quoted by William, Earl of Carysfort, *Pageants of Richard Beauchamp*, p. xiii (p. L).



Figure 12. Annunciation. Master of the Dresden Prayerbook.
 New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 1077, fols 37^v–38^r.
 By permission of The Morgan Library.



Figure 13. King David. Master of the Dresden Prayerbook.
New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 1077, fols 118^v–119^r.
By permission of The Morgan Library.

chantry chapel of Henry V in Westminster Abbey, the two works that introduced Netherlandish-Burgundian realism into English sculpture.⁶⁵

In the building of the Beauchamp Chapel, 'All of the surviving contracts, for the glass, the woodwork, and the marble and copper work of the tomb, prove that the executors dealt with the leading Londoners in the various crafts.'⁶⁶ Statues of mourners, cast in 1452 and 1453, were painted and gilded by one 'Bartholomew Lambespringe, Dutchman', who was further responsible for making 'the visages and hands and all other bares of the said images, in most quick and fair wise'.⁶⁷ Perhaps pertinent to the detailed representations of armour in the Pageants, the effigy of Earl Richard wears 'a contemporary suit of the finest Milanese workmanship. Evidently some suits of this armour had reached London by the 40s, [...] in the smallest details of the armour there is displayed a meticulous fidelity to nature'.⁶⁸

Another younger artist employed to paint statues in the Beauchamp Chapel was Christian Colbourne (d. 1486), a painter trained in western Germany or the Netherlands, possibly from the area of Utrecht. The indenture, recorded by Dugdale, describes Colbourne's covenant to paint statues of the Virgin, the Angel Gabriel, St Anne, and St George (since destroyed by the puritans) 'with the finest oyle colours in richest, finest and freshest clothings that may be made of fine gold, azure, of fine purple, of fine white and other finest colours necessary, garnished, bordered and powdered in the finest and curiousest wise'.⁶⁹ Though none of Colbourne's work can now be identified, he was steadily employed as a painter in London for a period of about thirty years, working for the Great Wardrobe and supplying painted banners with coats-of-arms, among other items, for the

⁶⁵ Philip Lindley, '1 John Massingham', in *The Grove Dictionary of Art Online* (Oxford University Press), <<http://www.groveart.com>> (accessed 1 December, 2004). See also Lawrence Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1955; repr. 1972), p. 206, who describes father and son sculptors, both named John, the elder first noted at work in London in 1409. The son (fl. 1438–78) served as an apprentice to his father, working as both sculptor and painter well into the 1470s.

⁶⁶ Stone, *Sculpture in Britain*, p. 207.

⁶⁷ Stone, *Sculpture in Britain*, pp. 208–09. Lambespringe is further described as a goldsmith in the records, who may have finished the statue of the Earl 'by means of engraving, polishing, and gilding'.

⁶⁸ Stone, *Sculpture in Britain*, p. 210.

⁶⁹ Quoted by Anne F. Sutton, 'Christian Colborne, Painter of Germany and London, Died 1486', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 37 (1993), 55–61 (p. 56 and n. 9).

coronation of Richard III. In 1485, he is recorded as producing cartoons for the royal embroiderer in preparation for the coronation of Henry VII.⁷⁰ Several of these named artists contributed to the larger influx of Netherlandish-Burgundian style into English art, one of the stylistic hallmarks of the illustrations in the Beauchamp Pageants. Whether one of these artists might be further associated with the Pageants or whether the Pageants were one part of plans that were never completed for the Beauchamp Chapel remain subjects for conjecture.

These three fifteenth-century artefacts, which remain somewhat mysterious in origin, function as discourses of power. The social and political activities that informed their making emanated from the West Midlands, an important and sophisticated centre of book production in the fifteenth century, where noble patrons could readily commission works made to order from London or the continent. While 'it can hardly be accidental that three important works on the history of Warwick and its earls were produced in the mid-1480s, just as the issue of Anne Neville and her inheritance came into the public eye',⁷¹ the Rous rolls and Pageants also suggest the important activity of women as readers and patrons of manuscripts. A political purpose seems also to have motivated the making of Morgan M. 956 about a hundred years later, coming at the end of a tradition of heraldic manuscripts associated with Warwickshire, which shall be treated here as a postscript.⁷²

Morgan M. 956 was originally a late sixteenth-century roll (now bound) that depicts the Descents of the houses of Warwick and Essex in the larger context of earlier, purportedly historical, representations of Warwickshire families. Many of the same fictional forebears described by John Rous in his rolls appear again. The manuscript demonstrates the vitality of such stories as well as their continuity well after the Reformation. The genealogical tree in Morgan M. 956, which has been written and illuminated on vellum, is introduced by a full-page miniature of Guy of Warwick, his countess Felice, and their son, Reinbrun (Figure 14). Both the Rous rolls and the Morgan manuscript show Felice in similar attire, with a cloak held closed with an elaborate chain, and it is possible that the illustrator of Morgan M. 956 had seen one of the Rous rolls, or a close copy. Both texts describe various obscure heroes descended from Reinbrun, including his son Wegeatus,

⁷⁰ Sutton, 'Christian Colborne', p. 60.

⁷¹ Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', p. 337.

⁷² The manuscript has been discussed by Richmond, *Legend of Guy of Warwick*, pp. 189–91, and is fully described in Driver, 'Morgan MS M. 956', pp. 381–402.

his grandson Uffa, his great-grandson Walgeatus, his great-great-grandson Wygodus (Figure 15), and so on. Like the other manuscripts under discussion, the Morgan manuscript too is unfinished, ending abruptly on folio 5^v (Figure 16) with the genealogy of the Bohun and Beauchamp families. As in the Beauchamp Pageants, there are unfinished shields and blank medallions.

Morgan M. 956 was later owned by Lord William Howard (1563–1640) of Naworth, Cumberland, a friend of Robert Cotton and John Selden, and a major collector of books in his own right. Again, like the earlier manuscripts under discussion, the origins of Morgan M. 956 are murky. Either the manuscript was left unfinished or a large part of it has now been lost. In size, script and spelling of text, colour and style of miniatures, and layout, however, Morgan M. 956 most closely resembles BL, King's MS 396, an illuminated genealogy of Elizabeth I on vellum presented to the Queen most probably as a New Year's Day gift by one of the heralds, and like the King's manuscript, the Morgan roll may well have been produced for the same royal patron. According to the British Library catalogue, there is no evidence of authorship in King's MS 396, though Robert Cooke, Clarenceux King of Arms (d. 1593), has been put forward as a likely candidate as 'the style of painting is not unlike that of pedigrees executed by him or under his superintendence'.⁷³ King's MS 396 traces Queen Elizabeth's pedigree and includes coloured illustrations of various rulers such as William the Conqueror, along with descriptions of important historical figures such as the Empress Maud, or Matilda, who is discussed at some length as well in Morgan M. 956, as she is also in the Rous rolls. The King's manuscript clearly lays out the genealogy of the British monarchy, opening with a discussion of King Brutus, Britain's mythological founder. Like the earlier manuscripts we have seen, this manuscript too has a political agenda — to support a royal woman's claim to her heritage by visually demonstrating that 'the English sovereign was overlord of Scotland, a claim frequently asserted by Tudor monarchs'.⁷⁴

⁷³ The manuscript has been described by George F. Warner and Julius P. Gilson, *British Museum Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections*, vol. III: *Descriptions of the King's Manuscripts and Indexes to Both Collections* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921), pp. 65–66; and Elaine M. Paintin, *The King's Library* (London: British Library, 1989), fig. 11, p. 11. King's MS 396 is discussed at greater length in *Elizabeth: The Exhibition at the National Maritime Museum* ed. by Susan Doran (London: Chatto & Windus with the National Maritime Museum, 2003), item 100, pp. 105–06. BL, MS Additional 9772, a roll listing New Year's gifts exchanged at court, cites a genealogy given by Cooke to the Queen in the ninth year of her reign.

⁷⁴ *Elizabeth*, ed. by Doran, p. 106.

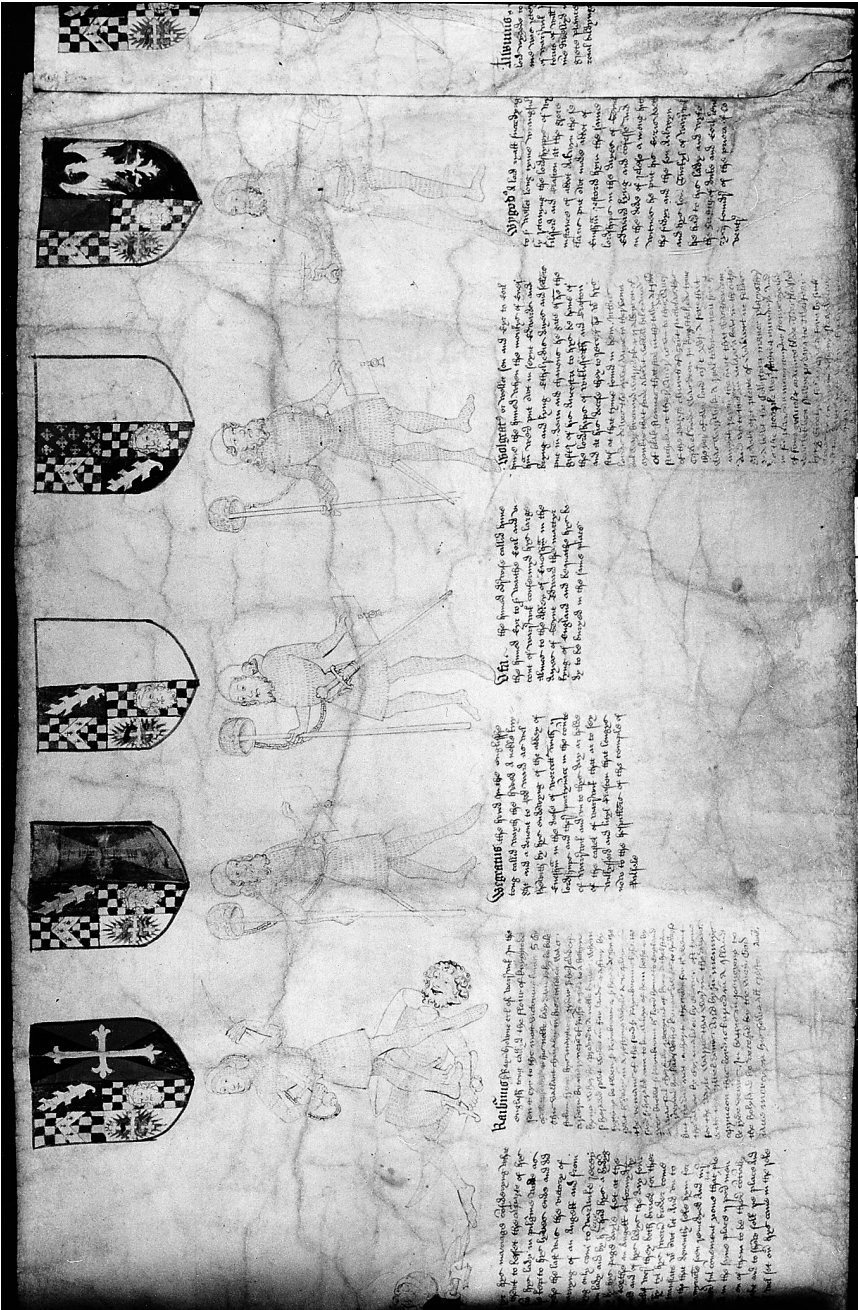


Figure 15. Reynbrowne (Reinbrun) and his descendants. Rous roll, London, British Library, MS Additional 48976, items 23–27. By permission of the British Library. All rights reserved.

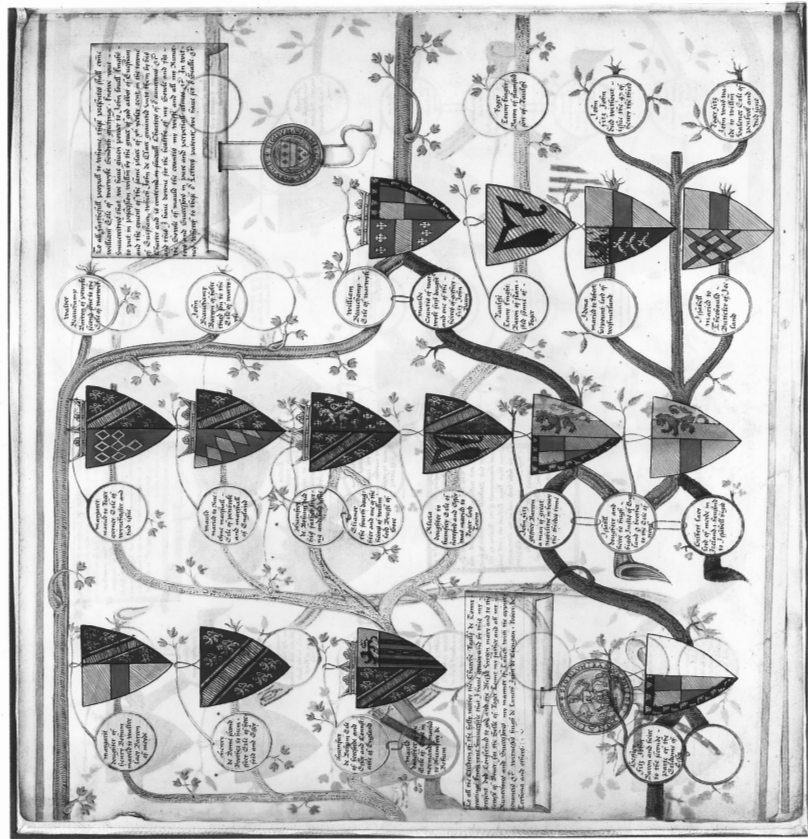


Figure 16. Genealogy of Bohun and Beauchamp Families. Descents of the houses of Warwick and Essex. New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 956, fol. 5^v. By permission of The Morgan Library.

Describing the political activities of the Kingmaker on the continent, Lowry comments that ‘scholarly exchanges were not a relief from this political process; they were an essential means of making it work’.⁷⁵ It is a commonplace that artistic patronage was a powerful political medium for Queen Elizabeth, but the Beauchamps and Nevilles clearly exploited their connections in these areas earlier as well. Anne Beauchamp’s convoluted personal history was very much intertwined with the political arena, as Elizabeth’s would be later, a fact visualized, however unconsciously, in her books. Through their heroic, historic, and heraldic representations of noble and royal families, all of these manuscripts function as stylized declarations of power and lineage, their intention being to restore and/or perpetuate female authority.

⁷⁵ See also Martha Driver, “‘In her owne persone semly and bewteus’: Representing Women in Stories of Guy of Warwick’, in *Icon and Ancestor: The Medieval and Renaissance Guy of Warwick*, ed. by Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2007), pp. 133–53. Lowry, ‘John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle’, p. 335.

OWNERS AND COPYISTS OF JOHN ROUS'S ARMORIAL ROLLS

David Griffith

The publication in 1729 of 'John Ross's Historical Account of the Earls of Warwick' by the Oxford antiquarian, diarist, librarian, and publisher Thomas Hearne stands as the first appearance in print of either of the two armorial roll chronicles made by John Rous in the early 1480s. Hearne's version of the Middle English 'Yorkist' roll (BL, MS Additional 48976), which was probably written slightly later than the Latin 'Warwick' or 'Lancastrian' roll (London, College of Arms, MS Warwick Roll), is an important milestone in the printed history of Rous's works, and forms a companion piece to Hearne's 1716 edition of Rous's *Historia regum Angliae*.¹ As significant as this publication remains, its description of Rous's account of the Earls of Warwick and their associates is incomplete. Whilst it includes the full Middle English text, Hearne makes no record of either the set of elaborately painted coats of arms or the fine pen-and-ink drawings, the two distinguishing features of the original. Though regrettable, these shortcomings are understandable. Hearne did not have a reputation for publishing works with illustrations; he had already reproduced in *Historia regum*

This essay grew out of a brief 'Response' to Martha Driver's paper on the Beauchamp Pageants and other Warwickshire manuscripts given to the University of Birmingham conference on West Midlands manuscripts in April 2003. I am grateful to Wendy Scase for her encouragement and patience as the piece gradually took shape, and to Rachel Canty and Jeremy Lowe for helpful comments.

¹ It appears as the second item in one of Hearne's many compendia of medieval and early modern historical documents: *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi II: Angliae Regis*, ed. by Thomas Hearne (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1729), pp. 217–39; *Joannis Rossi antiquarii warwicensis Historia regum Angliae*, ed. by Thomas Hearne (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1716).

Angliae a portrait of Rous (taken from Sir William Dugdale's *Antiquities of Warwickshire*),² and he had only an imperfect sixteenth-century copy of the roll as his source text.

It is not until William Courthope's 1859 facsimile edition of the English roll that we see the first printed record of the complete verbal and visual components of either of Rous's original rolls.³ In many ways Courthope's 'curious pictorial history' of the Earls of Warwick is a continuation of Hearne's scholarly interest in Rous, and it exemplifies the Victorian desire to bring unpublished or inaccessible historical and literary sources to a learned audience. It also stands as the culmination of an antiquarian and specifically heraldic interest in Rous, a respect that manifested itself in the production of manuscript facsimiles of his work stretching back to the sixteenth century. Before arriving in national library collections the two original rolls had moved in antiquarian circles in the Midlands and London generating at least six complete or partial copies, which in turn circulated widely before also migrating to national and local repositories.⁴ Significantly, the volume was produced not from any of the learned societies founded at this time — the Camden Society was begun in 1834, the Rolls Series in 1857, and the Early English Text Society in 1864 — but from amongst the ranks of the College of Arms. Courthope (1807–66) was a senior member of the College (by 1854 he had risen to be Somerset Herald), and his publication of the roll reveals how the heralds' custom of copying genealogies and pedigrees in manuscript form was increasingly taken over by recourse to print circulation.⁵ This essay will examine

² William Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire Illustrated* (London: Thomas Warren, 1656), p. 184. This engraving, like so many in Dugdale's major works, is by the Bohemian artist Wenceslaus Hollar, for which collaboration see Marion Roberts, *Dugdale and Hollar: History Illustrated* (London: Associated University Presses, 2002).

³ *This rol was laburd & finishid by Maistre John Rows of Warrewyk*, ed. by William Courthope (London: Henry Bohn, 1859); reprinted with a historical introduction on John Rous and the Warwick Roll by Charles Ross, editor of John Rous, *The Rous Roll* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1980).

⁴ For a list of the copies see Anonymous, 'A Note on the Copies of the Rous Roll', in *English Historical Scholarship in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, ed. by Levi Fox, Dugdale Society (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 29–132. An imperfect list is given by Anthony Wagner, *Aspilologia I. A Catalogue of English Mediaeval Rolls of Arms* (Oxford: Society of Antiquities, 1950), pp. 116–17; corrections are given in his *Aspilologia. Being Materials of Heraldry II. Rolls of Arms of Henry III* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 277–78.

⁵ Courthope's published works include the twentieth edition of *Complete Peerage of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: J. G. & F. Rivington, 1834), and *Historic*

the routes of friendship, kinship, and association along which the rolls and their copies travelled, from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth, and in doing so will consider the burgeoning textual industry of the post-medieval antiquarianism and Rous's position within it.

A discussion of the transmission and copies of the rolls should begin with a description of the articles themselves, of their creator, and of their circumstances of production. The English roll is made of eight vellum membranes 7000mm long by 335mm wide.⁶ The recto begins with a 'frontispiece' displaying the Warwick arms suspended from a tree beneath which lies the Earldom's heraldic bear; a scroll above the tree reads 'Arma Warrewici'. Following this are sixty-four pen-and-ink figures, some partly coloured, representing the Earls of Warwick and the Benefactors of the town of Warwick. These start with the founders of Warwick, Guthelinus and Gwiderius, and finish with King Richard III and his son, Prince Edward.⁷ The drawings form the central of three rows, the lower row being textual captions giving the figures' genealogy and the upper consisting of individual coats of arms painted on shields or hatchments. Most of the figures are identified by attributes or other heraldic iconography and many of them carry painted shields. For instance, Guy and his son Raiburn (Reinbrun) both have defeated giants at their feet while a number of the Beauchamp earls are shown with the bear. Between the figures are genealogical descents using the standard late medieval form of linked circles containing text with painted crowns and mitres distinguishing royal and ecclesiastical descendants. The same designs and format are used for the Latin roll, which is of twenty-three parchment membranes measuring 7328mm in length by a depth of 292mm. The recto has sixty-four figures accompanied by textual captions of irregular length and painted heraldic

Peerage of England (London: John Murray, 1857). He also produced hand-written pedigree rolls such as the illuminated genealogy of English kings from Brutus to George IV, now BL, MS Additional 43968 (dated 1827–30). For a career sketch see Thomas Woodcock, 'Courthope, William (1807–66)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6461>> (accessed 19 September 2005).

⁶ There is no modern edition or facsimile of the roll but detailed descriptions are given by Kathleen L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts 1390–1490*, 2 vols (London: Harvey Miller, 1996), II, 359–62, plates 500–01; and C. E. Wright, 'The Rous Roll: The English Version', *British Library Quarterly*, 20 (1956), 77–81. See also Antonia Gransden, 'Antiquarian Studies in Fifteenth-Century England', *Antiquaries Journal*, 60 (1980), 75–97 (repr. in her *Legends, Traditions and History in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon, 1992), pp. 299–328).

⁷ For examples see Figures 1–2 on pp. 170–71. In Courthope the figures are numbered from 1 to 64, starting with Guthelinus and closing with Edward Prince of Wales.

emblems. On the dorse are several coats of arms arranged as a frieze along one of margins and a portrait of Rous sitting at a desk in the act of writing.⁸

John Rous (c. 1420–91) probably entered the priesthood in the late 1440s after he had graduated as MA from Oxford in 1444.⁹ At this time he took up the position of chantry priest at Guy's Cliff, a foundation on the outskirts of Warwick that had recently been established by Richard Beauchamp, fifth Earl of Warwick (1389–1439), a place of great delight 'for he who desireth a retired life, either for his devotions or study'.¹⁰ This remained his position for the rest of his life during which he wrote a series of scholarly works, many of which were unconditional celebrations of his patrons, the Earls of Warwick. Rous's antiquarian interests and writings were extensive, though mostly lost to us in the great fire of Warwick in 1691 in which his library housed at St Mary's church was destroyed. The antiquary John Leland, who saw this collection in 1540, noted that Rous's output consisted of seven completed works, though some of these are now known to be spurious.¹¹ Of the bona fide works the most significant date from late in his career and all are shaped in some way by the volatile politics of the day. The *Historia regum Angliae* from about 1480 appears to have been intended for Edward IV but not being finished until 1486 was rededicated to the new king, Henry VII, and furnished with disparaging remarks about the physical deformities of Richard III. The precise dates of the execution of the two roll chronicles are unknown, but they must have been finished between 9 September 1483 (Richard's son Edward

⁸ There is no published facsimile of the roll, though the Latin text is given by Courthope as notes to his description of the plates (unpaginated). For descriptions of the Latin roll see P. R. Robinson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c.888–1600 in London Libraries*, 2 vols (London: British Library, 2003), I, 31; *Heralds' Commemorative Exhibition, 1484–1934, held at the College of Arms; enlarged and illustrated catalogue* (1936; repr. London: Tabard Press, 1970), pp. 50–51, plates XXV–XXVI; and Wagner, *Aspilogia I*, pp. 116–17. The application of reagents (gall) in the nineteenth century to make the text more legible has severely damaged the roll.

⁹ Rous's traditional 1411 birth date has been recently revised by Nicholas Orme, 'Rous, John', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24173>> (accessed 19 September 2005). For Rous's career, see Martin Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', *Viator*, 19 (1988), 327–38; Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, vol. II: *c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), pp. 309–27; and T. D. Kendrick, *British Antiquity* (London: Methuen, 1950), pp. 8–29, plates II–IV.

¹⁰ Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, p. 185.

¹¹ *Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britannicis, auctore Joanne Lelando Londinate*, ed. by Anthony Hall, 2 vols (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1709), II, 474–75.

is referred to as Prince of Wales) and April 1484 (by which time Edward had died). As with the *Historia regum Angliae* both rolls were originally complimentary to the reigning monarch, but after Richard's death at Bosworth Field the Latin roll was partially cut up and the positive remarks about Richard III expunged 'to give a more acceptably Lancastrian flavour'.¹² The English roll was not altered and retains its observation that Richard III was a 'myghti prince in his dayes speciall gode lord to the town & lordship of Warrewyk wher yn the castle he did gret cost off byldyng'.¹³ Some of the figures in both rolls are by the same artist — the text must have been composed by Rous who probably also oversaw the production. This may also be the case for the other visual document commonly attributed to him, the pictorial history of Richard Beauchamp known as the Beauchamp Pageants (BL, Cotton MS Julius E. IV, c. 1485–90). This manuscript consists of a sequence of fifty-three line drawings of the birth, life, and death of the Earl each accompanied by a short caption in English, and two 'arboreal' pedigrees of the Earl and his two wives.¹⁴ It is personal history mapped onto the political but with critical moments defined by Beauchamp upholding national and familial honour and status.

The exceptional array of visual materials relating to the history of the county is due in great part to the wealth of the Earls of Warwick, and to the central role the earldom played in regional and national politics throughout the fifteenth century, first under Richard Beauchamp, servant to three Lancastrian kings and greatest chivalric hero of his age, and then under his son-in-law Richard Neville, the 'Kingmaker', who supported the Yorkists but then changed his allegiance to Henry VI only to fall at the battle of Barnet in 1471.¹⁵ It is striking that all of these Warwickshire histories date from the 1480s. Because Neville was never attainted his lands should have passed to his heirs, but the prize of the earldom's

¹² Ann Payne, 'The Beauchamps and the Nevilles', in *Gothic Art for England 1400–1547*, ed. by Richard Marks and Paul Williamson (London: V&A Publications, 2003), pp. 219–33 (p. 232). For details of the alterations see Rous, *The Rous Roll*, ed. by Ross, pp. v–xviii.

¹³ According to Courthope's reckoning Richard III is number 17.

¹⁴ *The Beauchamp Pageant*, ed. by Alexandra Sinclair (Donington: Paul Watkins and Richard III & Yorkist History Trust, 2003). See also Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts*, II, 355–59, plates 455–59; and Kathleen L. Scott, *The Caxton Master and his Patrons* (Cambridge: Cambridge Bibliographical Society, 1976), pp. 55–66, 86–88.

¹⁵ *The Beauchamp Pageant*, ed. by Sinclair, pp. 25–49; David Brindley, *Richard Beauchamp, Medieval England's Greatest Knight* (Stroud: Tempus, 2001); Christine Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp Affinity: A Study of Bastard Feudalism at Work', *English Historical Review*, 95 (1980), 514–32; and Michael Hicks, *Warwick the Kingmaker* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002).

estates was too great for Edward IV to resist and the lands were partitioned between his brothers Clarence and Gloucester. Faced with the loss of her inheritance Neville's widow Countess Anne, Richard Beauchamp's daughter (1426–93), petitioned both Richard III and Henry VII to overturn the injustice done to her family. In these circumstances it is probable that both the rolls and the Pageants were in some way designed to celebrate the earldom as integral to the stability of the nation's political life and a bastion of support for the Crown. The precise function and intended audience or readership of each of the three items remains unclear. It has been argued that the Pageants was intended for Richard's son Prince Edward as a 'Mirror for Princes',¹⁶ or aimed at Henry VII as 'a most carefully calculated piece of family propaganda [...] to emphasize the loyalty of Earl Richard Beauchamp to the Lancastrian dynasty'.¹⁷ However, all three projects speak of the contingent as well as the general circumstances of manuscript production and of attitudes to the past at moments of acute political and social upheaval.

The Rous rolls are stylistically similar to a number of contemporary genealogies and armorial rolls, notably the Salisbury Roll, compiled between 1463 and 1467, which traces the history of the Montagu ancestors of Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury and Warwick.¹⁸ Unlike the newer forms of naturalistic depiction exemplified by the Beauchamp Pageants, the rolls present static images and the historical narrative is constructed through a sequence of related yet independent images. There are obvious points of contact here with the standard formal arrangements of statuary and painted images in late medieval art, about which Rous was particularly knowledgeable. In addition to Oxford and Warwick he visited a number of English towns and records that he began the *Historia* after a visit to the newly built college at Windsor where he saw empty niches for statues. He was later contacted by John Seymour, canon of St George's chapel, who asked him to prepare a small volume or 'opusculum' of historical personages that would inform the choice of statuary.¹⁹ The rolls do not envision history as a 'pictorial narrative' but collapse historical narrative into a compound of portraiture and armorial record that signifies position and authority above all other things. The art of

¹⁶ *The Beauchamp Pageant*, ed. by Sinclair, pp. 22–23.

¹⁷ Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', pp. 337–38.

¹⁸ Anthony Wagner, Nicolas Barker, and Ann Payne, *Medieval Pageant: Writhe's Garter Book: The Ceremony of the Bath and the Earldom of Salisbury Roll* (London: Roxburghe Club, 1993).

¹⁹ *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi II*, ed. by Hearne, p. 120.

heraldry does indeed indicate ties to a historical past but it offers no explicit commentary upon events. Context here, for rolls and statuary alike, is of utmost significance.

The circumstances of patronage and production of these late fifteenth-century manuscripts invite us to consider their post-medieval lives and especially the extensive copying and editing that went on into the nineteenth century. A notion of disinterested antiquarianism or scholarship is insufficient to explain the desire to preserve or repackage the past in genealogical form, for if we deny the manuscripts and their copies historical specificity they become icons for a depersonalized, dehistoricized book ownership. The construction of the medieval past for overt political and religious reasons begins with Leland and Bale in the immediate aftermath of the Dissolution, and we can chart its process through the activities of Elizabethan heralds and antiquaries like Robert Glover (1543/4–88) and Robert Cooke (d. 1593), both of whom had access to the rolls, and beyond. The interest in armorial bearings, tracing back family histories through the textual and material disruptions of the Reformation, is one of the most obvious of antiquarian pursuits. In a period of social change an unbroken pedigree authenticated by documentary evidence was good for more than just social cachet. This helps explain the continued interest in genealogical histories like the Rous rolls with their family trees, pedigrees, and records of illustrious ancestors. In the opening address to the reader in his nine hundred–page *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (1631) John Weever (1575/6–1632) laments the wanton destruction of the monuments of past generations:

they are (to the shame of our time) broken downe, and vtterly almost ruined, their brazen inscriptions erased, torne away and pilfered, by which inhumane, deformidable act, the honourable memory of many vertuous and noble persons deceased, is extinguished, and the true understanding of diuers families in these realms [...] is so darkened as the true course of their inheritance is thereby partly interrupted.²⁰

Weever's endeavour to rescue from oblivion the nation's dead legions of royalty, aristocracy, and commons is a singular achievement. Most of the laborious business of collecting inscriptions from churches he carried out himself, but there is also ready acknowledgement of the support given by members of the Heralds' Office. William le Neve (c. 1592–1661) and John Philipot (c. 1589–1645) offered regular assistance, but the greatest help came from Augustine Vincent (c.

²⁰ John Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (London: Thomas Harper, 1631), unpaginated (p. i).

1584–1626), Windsor Herald and Keeper of the Records in the Tower of London, who allowed him free access to the records in the College of Arms. As the owner of an extensive collection of heraldic and genealogical manuscript material, ‘the most important material attributable to a single herald at the College of Arms’,²¹ Vincent played a significant role not only in Weever’s project but also in the preservation and transmission of numerous medieval documents including the Rous rolls.

It is difficult to overestimate the heralds’ role as keepers of the nation’s memory. To safeguard and disseminate the wealth of genealogical and historical data stored in family rolls, individual heralds had begun collecting and copying medieval armorial rolls and chronicles from very early in the sixteenth century.²² The early Garter King of Arms Sir Thomas Wriothesley (d. 1534) owned and copied numerous early manuscripts including heraldic rolls and the lavishly illustrated *Writhe’s Garter Book* of c. 1488,²³ and his Elizabethan and Jacobean successors in the College followed his lead in amassing often very large individual collections. The opportunities for the development of such large personal libraries were quite extensive. Herald’s had access to a significant number of manuscripts in the royal libraries and those belonging to the leading nobility at court. Their assemblage of documents was further facilitated by contact with aristocratic and gentry families at regional level. Herald’s had the power to confer and correct arms, and the visitation system put them on county circuits in order to sanction the use of arms and restrict unauthorized usage.²⁴ With these opportunities industrious and scholarly members of the College could make extensive records, and many medieval rolls are known only through their facsimiles. In this extensive accumulation of records there was, however, much potential for conflict as throughout the sixteenth century acquisitions and copies of manuscripts remained largely in the possession of individual heralds.²⁵ Only with the death of great bibliophiles

²¹ A. E. Brown, ‘Vincent, Augustine (c.1584–1626), herald and antiquary’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/28307>> (accessed 19 September 2005).

²² The definitive study is Anthony Wagner, *The Herald’s of England: A History of the Office and College of Arms* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1967).

²³ Wagner, *Aspilogia* I, p. 156.

²⁴ On the position of the office of Herald under Henry VIII see Wagner, *Herald’s of England*, pp. 123–72.

²⁵ P. M. Selwyn, ‘“Such speciall bookes of Mr Somersettes as were sould to Mr Secretary”: The Fate of Robert Glover’s Collections’, in *Books and Collectors, 1200–1700: Essays Presented to*

such as Glover and Cooke at the end of Elizabeth's reign did the College take the opportunity to bring personal libraries into communal ownership.

The heralds' attention to tracing and recording historical material was matched by the county gentry's voracious appetite for genealogy.²⁶ Much of this was directed to the production of personal lineages to establish rights of ownership or lordship, though in more than a few cases what had begun as an interest in family pedigrees, the lineage of related families, and the locality grew into more ambitious studies. In Warwickshire, as elsewhere, as the Elizabethan and Stuart gentry worked out their own pedigrees they began actively collecting and exchanging antiquarian documentation. One of the most respected early antiquaries was the lawyer Henry Ferrers of Baddesley Clinton (1550–1633) who took a life-long interest in researching the Ferrers and related families.²⁷ A recognized authority on Warwickshire history, he appears to have been drawing up plans for his own county history and supplied material on Warwickshire for William Camden's *Britannia* (1586). In his later years these collections were used by his kinsman Sir Simon Archer (1581–1662) of Umberslade near Tamworth. As head of one of the oldest and wealthiest families and with ties to many of the county gentry, Archer was a leading figure in Warwickshire politics from the 1620s through to the 1660s, as Justice, High Sheriff, and in the 1640s as MP for Tamworth.²⁸ From an early age he had devoted considerable energies towards drawing up his family pedigree, but in the late 1620s and early 1630s this expanded into enquiries geared towards the creation of a county history. Like Ferrers, who was supposed to have taken antiquarian books out of John Rous's library at St Mary's Warwick, he had

Andrew Watson, ed. by James P. Carley and Colin G. C. Tite (London: British Library, 1997), pp. 389–401.

²⁶ Scholarship on this topic is considerable but see especially Graham Parry, *The Trophies of Time: English Antiquarians of the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); J. R. Broadway, 'Antiquarianism in the Midlands and the Development of County History, 1586–1656' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Birmingham, 1997); and Jan Broadway, *William Dugdale and the Significance of County History in Early Stuart England*, Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, 39 (Stratford-upon-Avon: Dugdale Society, 1999).

²⁷ Elizabeth K. Berry, *Henry Ferrers: An Early Warwickshire Antiquary 1550–1633*, Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, 16 (Oxford: Dugdale Society, 1965).

²⁸ A detailed account of Archer's life is given by Philip Styles, 'Sir Simon Archer: "a lover of antiquity and of the lovers thereof"', in his *Studies in Seventeenth Century West Midlands History* (Kineton: Roundwood Press, 1978), pp. 1–41, 263–71. An outline is given by Richard Cust, 'Archer, Sir Simon (1581–1662)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/626>> (accessed 19 September 2005).

identified Rous as the most important pre-Reformation Warwickshire historian and sought to collect as much information about him as possible.²⁹ Leland's mention of a spurious title *Antiquitates Warwicensi*, probably known to him through repetition in an early seventeenth-century history, became a particular hobby horse. In his collection of Rous materials he notes that the 'bookes [from St Mary's, Warwick] are all purloined and taken away and altogether unknown'.³⁰ As well as chasing the Ferrers lead he sent a copy of Leland's list to the Oxford antiquary Brian Twyne (1580–1644),³¹ and his personal archive includes a memo 'To desire of S^r Kellum Digby [Sir Kenelm Digby, 1603–55] John Rouses booke of ye descripth of ye Antiquities of Warwickshire'.³² In the end the hunt was to prove fruitless for Archer's basic information had come from misleading sixteenth-century transcriptions of Leland's list of Rous's books. Not until the early eighteenth century was the title correctly given as 'De Antiquitate Verovicensis urbis', though its authenticity is still unknown.³³

At most the English roll stayed in the family of the Earls of Warwick for a century and probably for no more than a generation. The first early modern record is the post-mortem inventory of the manuscripts in the library of Robert Cooke made on 12 October 1593. How Cooke obtained the roll is not known but as Clarenceux King of Arms from 1567 his visitations to register coats of arms and pedigrees across the entire province of southern England must have facilitated the extensive collection of heraldic and armorial material.³⁴ It is also possible that he acquired or inherited the roll from one of his predecessors in the Herald's Office; in the later sixteenth-century collections were passed down to successive holders

²⁹ On Archer's long-standing fixation with the contents of Rous's library see Styles, 'Sir Simon Archer', pp. 17–18.

³⁰ SBTRO, MS DR 37/3/49, fol. 2^r.

³¹ Styles, 'Sir Simon Archer', p. 17.

³² SBTRO, MS DR 37/3/86. Digby, Gentleman of the Bedchamber to Charles I, was a prolific collector who gave 233 books to the Bodleian; the remaining collection was sold in 1680, for which see R. T. Petersson, *Sir Kenelm Digby: The Ornament of England* (London: Cape, 1956); and Michael Foster, 'Digby, Sir Kenelm (1603–1665), natural philosophy and courtier', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/7629>> (accessed 19 September 2005).

³³ *Historia regum Angliae*, ed. by Hearne, p. xxvi.

³⁴ J. F. R. Day, 'Cooke, Robert (d.1593)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6148>> (accessed 19 September 2005).

of the position of Clarenceux.³⁵ According to this inventory Cooke had also been in possession of the Salisbury Roll. Immediately following an item listed as 'A Rowle of Parchments of the descente of the Earle of Salisbury in Personages' is the entry for 'A Rowle of the Ancient Earls of Warwick in parchmente'.³⁶ This does not necessarily mean that there was a particular Warwickshire focus to Cooke's studies, just that as well as being artistically unsurpassed the Beauchamp-Neville connection gave the rolls national significance.

It is unlikely that this is the item recorded as 'Le role des conte de Warwil [*sic*]' in a list of books in Henry VIII's library at Richmond Palace, February 1535.³⁷ This partial inventory, probably transcribed from a more complete record of the books rather than close perusal of the library itself, was made by an important but unnamed French visitor to Henry's court.³⁸ A likely candidate is Palamède Gontier, treasurer of Brittany, who was negotiating a marriage between Francis I's third son and one of the English princesses. If the marked French orientation of the list reflects the visitor's own interests it also indicates the basic composition of the library, which was principally made up of volumes formerly owned by Edward IV and Henry VII. The English books are given their English titles ('Cronicles of England', 'The Bible in Englishe') and the French ones, mostly from Edward IV's library, are named in French ('La fleur des histoires', 'Le mirouer historial'). The visitor's language may not signify but it strongly suggests that at least part of the manuscript was in French, as were other chronicles in the inventory such as the 'Le role des roys d'Angleterre' (now perhaps either BL, MS Royal 14. B. V or MS Royal 14. B. VI, roll-chronicles of the English kings with explanations in French). If this is the case another, now lost, pre-Reformation pedigree of the Earls of Warwick was worthy enough to find a home in the royal collection.

Very soon after his death Cooke's library was purchased by the College of Arms, an act that has been seen as marking the true foundation of the College library.³⁹ On the dorse the title 'Johannes Rossus Warwicensis' appears in a hand

³⁵ Wagner, *Heralds of England*, pp. 170–71.

³⁶ BL, MS Lansdowne 75, fol. 74.

³⁷ This discussion of the Richmond Palace roll follows *The Libraries of King Henry VIII*, ed. by James P. Carley, *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues*, 7 (London: British Library, 2000), pp. 3–29.

³⁸ This is now Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Moreau 849, fols 166^r–167^r.

³⁹ Wagner, *Heralds of England*, p. 221.

resembling that of John Philipot, Somerset Herald 1624–45, who would have had access to it. The roll was still at the College in 1640 when it was seen by William Dugdale. After this the roll again slips out of sight for a century and more — it was perhaps removed from the College during the transportation of its library in the late seventeenth century — only to re-emerge in private hands. By 1768 it had entered the collection of the Dukes of Manchester at the family seat of Kimbolton castle in Huntingdonshire. The roll was still there in 1869 when it was recorded by the first Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts as being part of the library of the sixth Duke, William Drogo Montagu.⁴⁰ With bankruptcy looming the tenth Duke sold the contents of the library in 1947 (contrary to the terms of his father's will of 1923) and in 1955 the roll was purchased for £2500 from Messrs Robinson of Pall Mall by the British Museum.⁴¹

The Latin roll seems to have passed through fewer hands than the English roll. By the end of the seventeenth century it had reached its current home in the College of Arms but its progress there is not fully documented. Its immediate destination after commission by Anne Neville is unknown, and like the English roll it may have found its way into the College of Arms as part of the collection of one of the heralds or kings of arms. What is certain is that before its entry into the heralds' library it circulated amongst a number of early seventeenth-century Warwickshire antiquarians who fully appreciated its significance. Archer's copy notes that it is taken from

an antient Rolle made by John Rouse concerning ye building of Warwick towne and ye earle of Warwick copied out of ye originall An^o Dm 1636. The Roll itself remayning in ye custody of Rob[er]t Arden of Parkhall [near Castle Bromwich, Warwickshire] [...] it being a very fayre peece of Antiquitye.⁴²

Arden's acquisition of the roll is also undocumented. In spite of their Catholic beliefs the family had remained amongst the ranks of the county's landed gentry since the late medieval period and indeed the particular interest in genealogical records shown by Warwickshire recusant families should not be overlooked.⁴³ It

⁴⁰ Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, 'Report on the Manuscripts of the Duke of Manchester at Kimbolton Castle', in *Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1st Report* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1870), appendix 12–13.

⁴¹ Wright, 'Rous Roll: The English Version', pp. 77–81.

⁴² SBTRO DR 37/3/49, fol. 2^r.

⁴³ The cultivation of family and county histories by Catholic families in the post-Reformation period is examined by Richard Cust, 'Catholicism, Antiquarianism and Gentry Honour: The Writings of Sir Thomas Shirley', *Midland History*, 23 (1998), 40–70.

is most likely that Robert inherited the book from his grandfather, with whom he acted as a commissioner of the peace before the Civil War.⁴⁴

Robert Arden died in 1643, unmarried, heirless, and heavily in debt, and the estate and possessions were divided between his four sisters and their husbands.⁴⁵ Soon afterwards the roll migrated into Augustine Vincent's collection and through his son John it passed to another prominent and prosperous Warwickshire antiquarian, Ralph Sheldon (1623–84) who had manors at Beoley in Worcestershire and Weston in Warwickshire. Sheldon's Catholicism precluded significant public office; worse, his faith allied to his ardent royalism led to persecution from both Puritans and Parliamentarians and the sequestration of his estates.⁴⁶ With the lost estates restored to him soon after the Restoration, Sheldon settled down to intellectual pursuits. He built up a large library of heraldic, genealogical, and historical material, which was catalogued by the Oxford scholar Anthony Wood (1632–95) who later acted as his bibliographic executor. He awarded an annuity to John Vincent, also an antiquary, who later sold him his father's extensive manuscript collection. In a note to Dugdale on 19 July 1684 Wood outlined the terms of Sheldon's will by which many manuscripts, including the Warwick roll, were bequeathed to the College of Arms:

Item, to my good friend and Fellow Antiquary Mr. Anthony à Wood of Merton Coll. In Oxon, I give the sum of —, desiring him to see my Pedegrees and all my MSS. And other pap's (except such as are written with my owne hand) to be delivered into the Herald's Office, seated neare Paul's Wharf, London, and y^e they may be put into a Cubboard a part from others.⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Ann Hughes, *Politics, Society and Civil War in Warwickshire, 1620–1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 97.

⁴⁵ Hughes, *Politics, Society and Civil War in Warwickshire*, p. 31; and C. E. B. Hubbard, 'Castle Bromwich', in *The Victoria County History of the County of Warwick*, 6 vols, ed. by H. Arthur Doubleday, William Page, and others (London: Constable, 1904–), IV, 45–47 (p. 45).

⁴⁶ Jan Broadway, 'Sheldon, Ralph (1623–1684), antiquary', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/25306>> (accessed 19 September 2005); and Hughes, *Politics, Society and Civil War in Warwickshire*, pp. 62–64.

⁴⁷ *The Life, Diary, and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale*, ed. by William Hamper (London: Harding, Lepard, 1827), pp. 434–35. Another item in the bequest, a copy of Nicholas Upton's *De officio militari* (1441) transcribed by Robert Glover, records his ownership ('Given to the Heralds office by Raphe Sheldon of Beoly Esq, who dying 24 June 1684, was buried at Beoly'), for which see Robinson, *Catalogue*, p. 130. Wood's friendship with Dugdale was seriously compromised by the older man's ill feeling about the terms of the Sheldon bequest.

Given the reputation of Rous, the diversity of the ownership of the two original rolls, and the antiquarian interest in them as primary evidence for both Warwickshire and national history, proliferation of facsimiles was natural. From the English roll three copies were made, all significantly in the period 1560–1640 when the business of establishing familial, regional, and national histories reached its apogee. The earliest appears as the third item in an important late sixteenth-century volume of heraldic, armorial, and genealogical material now BL, MS Lansdowne 882.⁴⁸ The date suggests it was copied from the original by one of the heralds who accessed it when it was owned by Robert Cooke. It is the longest item in the volume, taking up just under a quarter of the eighty-six folios (fols 6–23^v, 67^{r-v}, 83^{r-v}), and presents the textual history of the Earls of Warwick, their painted coats of arms on shields, and a selection of competent watercolour versions of Rous's pen-and-ink portraits. Nothing is known of its possession in the seventeenth century but by the early 1700s it had become the property of the Warwickshire gentleman Thomas Ward (c. 1699–1742). As a local historian and bibliophile Ward collected material relating to the history of the county, especially Warwick and Coventry, as well as items of general medieval interest.

This copy might well have continued to circulate in Ward's county network but for his entry in the early 1720s into the circle of Thomas Hearne (1678–1735).⁴⁹ Hearne, of Edmund Hall, Oxford, was by this time a well-respected antiquary who had established a reputation as a publisher of significant editions of medieval texts, but as a Nonjuror and a Jacobite had found his professional ambitions thwarted and his career drastically curtailed. He had been forced to relinquish a post at the university press and then in 1716 suffered the more serious blow of losing his position as second librarian at the Bodleian from which he was literally locked out. Further, he was denied the use of the university imprint and forbidden from using the Bodleian manuscripts. Deprived of his university posts he turned to producing more regular publications, and the lengthy lists of subscribers to his editions of the late 1710s and 1720s show how many of the leading antiquaries and scholars of the period offered financial support. Many also provided him with

⁴⁸ Though the manuscript is generally thought to be Elizabethan, the nineteenth-century British Library catalogue dates it to the early sixteenth century: *A Catalogue of the Lansdowne Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London: R & A Taylor, 1819), pp. 221–22.

⁴⁹ The discussion of Hearne's activities follows the lead given by Theodor Harmsen, *Antiquarianism in the Augustan Age: Thomas Hearne 1678–1735* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000); see also David C. Douglas, *English Scholars 1660–1730*, 2nd rev. edn (London: Eyre & Spottiswode, 1951), pp. 178–94. A useful sketch of Ward's career and his friendship with Hearne is given by Harmsen, pp. 131–32.

books, manuscripts, and other gifts. Ward had no scholarly reputation but through the agency of a fellow Warwickshire gentleman and antiquary, Thomas Rawlins of Pophills near Wixford, he began a reciprocal relationship whereby he furnished Hearne with manuscript and archive materials in exchange for new publications and other volumes. Hearne's personal papers and letters are littered with references to materials provided by Ward, and he makes generous acknowledgment of his help in his publications. The writings of the Augustinian John Mirk provided one mutual interest,⁵⁰ John Rous a more compelling one. In his 1716 edition of Rous's *Historia regum Angliae* Hearne recognized Rous's importance and ruefully set out the limits of his personal knowledge of the author's work:

But of these his writings, most, I suppose, are perish'd, or in such obscure hands, that it is not known to me where they can be seen. Those only which are extant, being a Roll of the Earls of Warwick (wherein besides a brief Historie relating to each of them, their Pictures and Arms are with much curiosity depicted) and a Chronicle of the Kings of England reaching down to his own time.⁵¹

The 'Roll' referred to here is Robert Arden's copy of the Latin Warwick roll which Hearne knew only through Dugdale's reference in *Antiquities of Warwickshire*. Access to Ward's 'ancient MS', even if it was only a copy of the original, thus offered Hearne valuable publishable material and a welcome means to further establish Rous's significance as a witness of late fifteenth-century history.⁵²

By the mid-1740s Ward's manuscript had come into the possession of politician and antiquary James West (1703–72), brought about by their mutual acquaintance with Hearne and their shared Warwickshire roots. West was an avid collector whose accumulation of manuscripts and antiquities had begun whilst still a student at Balliol College, Oxford.⁵³ He had known Hearne since this time

⁵⁰ In a letter dated 16 November 1724 Hearne thanked Ward for having sent him a copy of 'your old MS. Festival or Festial'; on 28 June 1725 he wrote to say that public acknowledgement of the debt would appear in his edition of Peter Langtoft's chronicle (Bodleian, MS Autograph d.13, item 8). The edition appeared later that year: *Peter Langtoft's Chronicle (as illustrated and improv'd by Robert of Brunne) from the death of Cadwalader to the end of K. Edward the first's reign*, ed. by Thomas Hearne (Oxford: Sheldonian Theatre, 1725), pp. cxcvi–ccci.

⁵¹ *Historia regum Angliae*, ed. by Hearne, p. xxx.

⁵² Rawlins, Ward, and West are all amongst the subscribers to *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi II*, ed. by Hearne, pp. 446–47. For Hearne's treatment of the roll see Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p. 311, n. 18.

⁵³ W. P. Courtney, 'West, James (1703–1772)', rev. Patrick Woodland, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29085>> (accessed 19 September 2005).

and they remained in close contact throughout Hearne's later career, his politics apparently causing West few anxieties. Their extant correspondence of three hundred letters speaks of a warm and long-standing friendship beyond the exchanges of colleagues brought together merely by intellectual or antiquarian pursuits.⁵⁴ A reflection of this high regard appears at the start of Lansdowne 882 where West notes that the drawings of the Earls appeared to derive from the original Latin roll once owned by Robert Arden of Parkhall and that the text 'is printed by Mr. Hearne at the end of his *Life of Richard the Second*, though without the arms or draughts of their effigies here expressed'.⁵⁵ At this time Rous's English roll was inaccessible to scholars and may indeed not have found its way into the library at Kimbolton.

West's marriage of scholarly interests and worldly position conferred upon him an enviable reputation from very early in his career. He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society at twenty-two, Fellow of the Society of Antiquities a year later, MP for St Albans, secretary to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and to the Treasury, a trustee of the British Museum at its institution in 1753, and President of the Royal Society from 1768 until his death. He was also very wealthy. Marriage into a London merchant family brought a handsome settlement which secured his estate at Alscott near Stratford-upon-Avon and a town house in Covent Garden. This financial security allowed him to build up a significant collection, which included heraldic and genealogical volumes acquired from notable historical, theological, and antiquarian libraries.⁵⁶ In a 1731 sale he secured the library of the herald Peter le Neve (1661–1729), Norroy King of Arms from 1704 to 1729, and in 1733 he bought the manuscript section of the library of the antiquarian Dr Thomas Rawlinson (1681–1725), which Richard Rawlinson was forced to sell to cover his brother's profligacy and financially disastrous marriage. In the 1740s West also acquired numerous volumes from the Harleian library after the death of his friend Edward Harley (1689–1741), son of Robert Harley and second Earl of Oxford, who had inherited both his father's title and a love of books bordering on mania. West knew his collection to be of great scholarly significance and had

⁵⁴ Harmsen, *Antiquarianism in the Augustan Age*, pp. 135–36.

⁵⁵ Lansdowne 882, fol. 1'.

⁵⁶ R. C. Lucas, 'Book-Collecting in the Eighteenth Century: The Library of James West', *The Library*, 5th series, 3 (1949), 265–78; and Nigel Ramsey, 'English Book Collectors and the Salerooms in the Eighteenth Century', in *Under the Hammer: Book Auctions since the Seventeenth Century*, ed. by Robin Myers, Michael Harris, and Giles Mandelbrote (London: British Library, 2001), pp. 89–110.

considered it might be preserved intact in its own museum, but within twelve months of his death in July 1772 the entire collection had been sold. The manuscripts were bought en masse by Lord Shelburne (1737–1805), later Marquess of Lansdowne. After his death they were purchased for the nation with a parliamentary grant and in 1807 entered the British Museum as the Lansdowne collection.⁵⁷

Another partly coloured copy of the English roll, MS Ashmole 839 in the Bodleian Library, was made by Robert Glover, Somerset Herald 1570–88. According to Sir Anthony Wagner, chronicler of the College of Arms and the twentieth-century's finest herald, Glover displayed a 'critical and scholarly approach to his studies without parallel amongst his contemporaries'.⁵⁸ It is with good reason that he has acquired the tag of the 'herald's heraldist'.⁵⁹ Extensive heraldic research led to biographies, genealogies, and political tracts and he sought out and copied most of the surviving medieval rolls of arms. Ashmole 839 is part of this scheme, and the inventory of books taken on 1 June 1588 soon after his death reveals a particular interest in Rous's histories of the Earls of Warwick. The entry 'Xii The life of Richard Beucham Erle of Warwick' is the first known reference to the Beauchamp Pageants.⁶⁰ Glover's copy, dated 1572 and introduced with the heading 'This roll was labourd and finishd by Mr. Johns Rows of Warwyk', records the Middle English text, the diagrammatic genealogies, and a handful of crude and mostly unfinished sketches of the portraits of the earls and their descendants. The drawings are not accurate copies and are mostly uncoloured but with alphabetic colour codes. After the text Glover gives fifty-five armorial shields with titles from the verso of the original roll (fols 30^r–31^r) and then a genealogy 'found biforn in the roll of Warwyk' (fols 35^v–39^r).⁶¹ Following his untimely death Glover's collection was broken up. The Beauchamp Pageants passed to Sir Robert Cotton, and Ashmole 839 eventually found its way into Elias Ashmole's collection.

⁵⁷ Arundell Esdaile, *The British Museum Library: A Short History and Survey* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1946), pp. 248–50.

⁵⁸ Wagner, *Heralds of England*, p. 207.

⁵⁹ Nigel Ramsey, 'Glover, Robert (1534/4–1588)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24173>> (accessed 19 September 2005).

⁶⁰ BL, MS Lansdowne 58, fols 105–06. Glover's ownership was first noted by Nigel Ramsey (*The Beauchamp Pageant*, ed. by Sinclair, p. 1).

⁶¹ Typically the rest of the volume (fols 39^v–197^r) contains a miscellany of historical items, notably monastic records and contemporary information of interest to Glover.

Of the three surviving copies of the English roll Sir Simon Archer's is arguably the most significant (now SBTRO, MS DR 37/3/49). Not having published in his own right Archer's contribution to Warwickshire antiquarianism can be easily underestimated, but as Dugdale's friend, sponsor, and collaborator he played a seminal role in shaping the *Antiquities of Warwickshire*. The sincerity of Dugdale's declaration of his indebtedness to his friend is not to be doubted — 'a diligent Gatherer and preserver of very many choice Manuscripts, and other rarities, whereof I have made speciall use, as almost every page in the book will manifest'.⁶² As with most of his contemporaries, the roots of Archer's antiquarianism lie in a concern for his own lineage and property, 'a combination of family pride and business acumen' as Philip Styles has it,⁶³ and the bulk of his surviving archive is made up of pedigrees of the Archers and their friends and relations, and extensive correspondence detailing his own estates and legal disputes.⁶⁴ Typifying the genealogical collection is a sextodecimo volume of pedigrees and rough pen-and-ink drawings of the armorial shields of the Archers and related families, with personalized notes relating to his own children (SBTRO, MS DR 37/3/48). This family-orientated research developed a network of contacts of whom the most important was the distinguished antiquary William Burton (1575–1645), whose *Description of Leicestershire* (1622) had met with great approval in antiquarian circles. With strong Warwickshire connections of his own, Burton had been collecting materials towards a history of the county and thereby entered into correspondence with Archer in the 1620s. This appears to have given impetus to Archer's collection of materials towards such a project, though whether this was in his own right or on behalf of Burton is unclear.⁶⁵ The friendship between Archer and Burton is signalled by the latter's gift in 1628 of a heraldic collection taken from a variety of armorial rolls in which the Archer arms are displayed prominently on the front and back covers (SBTRO, MS DR 37/3/44). By the early 1630s Archer was drawing up plans for a major study of the county's gentry, including sending out questionnaires on memorials and heraldry in parish churches to incumbents and churchwardens,⁶⁶ and had enlisted the help of

⁶² Dugdale, *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, unpaginated (p. ii).

⁶³ Styles, 'Sir Simon Archer', p. 6.

⁶⁴ For Archer's dispute and litigation amongst Warwickshire gentry more generally, see Hughes, *Politics, Society and Civil War in Warwickshire*, pp. 47–48.

⁶⁵ Styles, 'Sir Simon Archer', pp. 17–21, 25–26.

⁶⁶ Archer's notes towards this project survive in SBTRO, MS DR 37/3/46.

Dugdale to whom he had been introduced by Burton. These circumstances led directly to the acquisition of both the English and Latin versions of the Rous roll then circulating amongst the county gentry.

Dugdale's letter of 3 June 1636 to Archer is the first definite mention of the project. It is also the earliest record of Dugdale's contact with Robert Arden's copy of the Warwick roll, which Archer must have borrowed for him from his kinsman. He tells Archer he has 'well neare' copied it, 'that which is wanting being not possibly legible without helpe of water, neyther will it be much materiall as you shall perceive'.⁶⁷ Dugdale wrote again ten days later promising to bring the roll the following week and entreating Archer to 'provide some water for recoverye of the blinde wordes, which otherwise will never be read'.⁶⁸ Clearly the methods employed to recover the full text proved worrisome to the owner and on 18 November 1636 Dugdale wrote to Archer calling upon him to be solicitous in his dealings with Arden. This letter also reveals how interest in the roll extended beyond the Warwickshire gentry:

In respect of Mr Arden's often absence from home, I was twice frustrate of my intentions ere this to have seene him, soe y^e till yesterday I cold not meete wth him (com'ing accidentally to the wedding of one of his Sisters). I gave him many thanks from you for the Roll, w^{ch} he desireth to have before he goe to Oxford (w^{ch} he purposeth on Munday next). I suppose he hath p^rmis'd the sight therof to some p^rson of qualitee. He sayth you shall have it againe hereafter at convenient leisure to take the pictures. I desire y^e you will please to send yo^r man purposely therwth unto him tomorrow, wth some gratulatorie lynes for his curtesye, and wth all intimatinge yo^r desire therof hereafter to fulfill yo^r purpose. I acquainted him wth the stayninge therof by the washinge, wthout w^{ch} it could not have bin legible, wherwth he is well satisfied, nevertheless I pray you make some Apologie therefore. He is very joyfull that we have gained the same, and earnestly intreates a Copeye, w^{ch} I have p^rmis'd him, and shall be y^e w^{ch} I first tooke, (being p^rfecte'd).⁶⁹

Both Dugdale and Archer prized their opportunity to study the roll. Archer's copy, which gives the textual captions and genealogies but none of Rous's drawings or shields, must date from his first handling of the roll early in 1636. After this he passed it to Dugdale, which resulted in the other two extant copies and

⁶⁷ *Life, Diary, and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale*, ed. by Hamper, pp. 155–56. The rest of the letter confirms their common interest in collections relating to the Earls of Warwick: 'I pray you speake to Jo. Hunt at the Sessions, for the Seales he promised us of Rich. Beauchamp, E. of War., and what other you can get. Borow if you can the black book of Warwick, (Rouse quotes it as I thinke in the Rolle).'

⁶⁸ *Life, Diary, and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale*, ed. by Hamper, p. 157.

⁶⁹ *Life, Diary, and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale*, ed. by Hamper, p. 159.

may have generated more that are now lost. As the letter of 18 November implies, one of these, still in the possession of the Dugdale family (Merevale Hall, Warwickshire, MS Merevale 12), is a rough copy of the text, figures, and tricks of shields.⁷⁰ The other, probably made directly from the rough version, is now part of the Dugdale collection in the Bodleian Library (Bodleian, MS Dugdale 14, olim Dugdale G.2). This is a precise, paginated, and indexed facsimile that gives the biographical text and accurate coloured paintings of the shields, assorted heraldic accoutrements, and figures, including a delicate copy of Rous's self-portrait. It must date from after 1638 given that it is preceded in the volume by a copy of the Beauchamp Pageants, taken from 'a faire antient boke in vellom, in the library of Sire Thomas Cotton'.⁷¹ In that year Archer took his protégé Dugdale to London to introduce him to the aged Sir Henry Spelman (1563/4–1641), eminent lawyer and founder member of the Society of Antiquaries. Through the good offices of Spelman and the politician Sir Christopher Hatton, to whom he had also been introduced on that visit, Dugdale was soon appointed to a junior post in the office of heralds. This new status gave him access not only to Cotton's library but also to the English roll then held in the College library. By this means the English text and pedigrees, though not the drawings or shields, were copied into Archer's volume, supplementing the Latin version taken from Arden's manuscript and a copy of Richard Beauchamp's will. The transcript of the roll is by an unidentified hand but at its head Dugdale notes that it is 'The copy of an other Rolle of Rouses remayning in the Herauldes Office 1640'.⁷² It is doubtless to this volume Dugdale refers in a letter to Archer dated 16 July 1640 which mentions the return of the book 'wherin Rouse's Roll is copyed'.⁷³ A memorandum 'to take Rouses Role with me' on a journey from Umberslade to Warwick shows that Archer, like Arden before him, was lending or at least showing his copy to other interested parties.⁷⁴

The passing of Archer and Dugdale, combined with the publication of *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, effectively marks the end of circulation of Rous materials amongst Warwickshire antiquaries. When the male Archer line failed at the end of the eighteenth century the family archive passed to Sarah, daughter of Andrew Archer, second Baron Archer (1736–78), and wife of Other Hickman, fifth Earl

⁷⁰ I have not been able to gain access to this manuscript.

⁷¹ Dugdale 14, p. vii.

⁷² SBTRO DR 37/3/49, fol. 2^v.

⁷³ *Life, Diary, and Correspondence of Sir William Dugdale*, ed. by Hamper, p. 97.

⁷⁴ SBTRO DR 37/2/86.

of Plymouth.⁷⁵ The papers remained in the Earl's family until 1946 when they were deposited with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. Many of Dugdale's manuscripts fell to his son-in-law, the antiquary and herald Elias Ashmole (1617–92) by whose bequest they entered the newly established Ashmolean Museum, where Hearne consulted what is now Dugdale 14, and thence to the Bodleian Library.⁷⁶

Even so, continued interest in pre-Reformation British history meant that Rous remained in the public eye throughout the eighteenth century, focused by Hearne's editions.⁷⁷ As well as continuing as a reference point for antiquarian study, Rous also became enlisted in literary debate. Indeed, by catching the attention of Horatio (Horace) Walpole (1717–97), Rous assumed a role in English Gothic. Though Walpole enjoyed a long career as MP his political calling was not that of his Prime Minister father. He served lengthy terms in Parliament for Callington, Castle Rising, and Kings Lynn but his real *métier* was as a connoisseur and patron of the arts.⁷⁸ From his 'Gothic' villa at Strawberry Hill in Middlesex he wrote history, art history, fiction, and poetry and corresponded with and entertained a wide circle of scholars, antiquarians, writers, and art lovers. His first encounter with Rous appears to have been whilst researching *Anecdotes on Painting*, a survey of English art of which the first two volumes were published in 1762. In the rather sketchy coverage of the late medieval period he notes Rous's attempts at self-portraiture and 'other semblances' but considers them 'in too rude a manner to be called paintings'.⁷⁹ Greater familiarity did little to improve his initial assessment of Rous's qualities. In *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard the Third* (1768), his fervent contribution to the vigorous contemporary

⁷⁵ Andrew's second wife, Sarah Archer (1741–1801), was the daughter of James West, sometime owner of Lansdowne 882. This is less coincidental than it might seem given the county prominence of the two families.

⁷⁶ On 21 March 1725 Hearne wrote to Thomas Ward telling him that 'Rouses Hist. of the Earls of Warwick is in the Ashm. Museum, among Sir Wm Dugdale's MSS. But 'tis only a transcript, done by Sir Wm himself (Autograph d.13, item 15).

⁷⁷ See Rosemary Sweet, *Antiquarians: The Discovery of the Past in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Hambledon, 2004).

⁷⁸ R. W. Ketton-Cremer, *Horace Walpole: A Biography*, 3rd edn (London: Methuen, 1964); and Brian Fothergill, *The Strawberry Hill Set: Horace Walpole and his Circle* (London: Faber, 1983).

⁷⁹ Horace Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England; with some account of the principal artists*, 4 vols (Twickenham: Thomas Farmer at Strawberry-Hill, 1762–71), I, 55. The information for Rous's portrait did not come directly from Dugdale's *Warwickshire* but from the reproduction in the second edition of Hearne's *Historia regum Anglia* (1745).

debate upon the villainy of Richard III, Rous is dismissed as weak and credulous and his histories — ‘most of which are *not* unfortunately lost’ — as fanciful and partisan.⁸⁰ In spite of this Walpole is still able to give some weight to the account of Richard’s physical appearance:

I found him too despicable and lying an author, even amongst monkish authors, to venture to quote him, but for two facts; for the one of which as he was an eye-witness, and for the other, as it was of publick notoriety, he is competent authority.⁸¹

But for his discovery of the drawings of King Richard in the rolls this might have been the limit of Walpole’s regard. *Historic Doubts* includes only two images of the monarchs, and it seems clear that before publication the only image from the rolls Walpole knew were those in Dugdale’s *Warwickshire*.⁸² However, on 17 February 1768 he received a letter from Lord Sandwich telling him of a ‘very curious pedigree’ in ‘some old papers’ in the library of the Duke of Manchester (George Montagu, the fourth Duke, 1737–88) in which were drawings of Richard III, his wife Anne, and son Prince Edward.⁸³ This ‘discovery’ of the English roll was of pressing interest and he immediately wrote to the Duke, a schoolfellow from Eton, as he notes in a letter of 26 February 1768 to his good friend Thomas Gray:

Lord Sandwich [...] very obligingly sent me an account of the roll of Kimbolton; and has since, at my desire, borrowed it for me and sent it to town. It is as long as my Lord Lyttleton’s *History*; but by what I can read of it (for it is both ill written and much decayed), it is not a roll of kings, but of all that have been possessed of, or been earls of Warwick; or have not — for one of the first earls is Aeneas. How, or wherefore, I do not know, but amongst the first is Richard III in whose reign it was finished, and with whom it concludes. [...] I shall, however, have these figures copied, especially as I know of no other image of the son. Mr. Astle is to come to me tomorrow morning to explain the writing.⁸⁴

⁸⁰ Horace Walpole, *Historic Doubts on the Life and Reign of King Richard the Third* (London: J. Dodsley, 1768), pp. 106–10.

⁸¹ Walpole, *Historic Doubts*, p. 106.

⁸² Walpole, *Historic Doubts*, p. 106.

⁸³ *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. by W. S. Lewis and others, 48 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937–83), xli, 134–35.

⁸⁴ *Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. by Lewis and others, xiv, 177–78. Thomas Astle (1735–1803), a noted palaeographer and member of the council of the Society of Antiquaries, had earlier provided Walpole with documentary materials for *Historic Doubts*. His attempts to read the captions proved unsuccessful — or were considered too time-consuming — and further expertise was called, as Walpole states in a letter of 22 April 1768 (*Walpole’s Correspondence*, xli, 144).

On long loan from Kimbolton, the roll was the subject of much discussion between Walpole and his antiquary friends. On 16 April 1768 Walpole wrote to another Old Etonian, the Rev. William Cole:

The Duke of Manchester has lent an invaluable curiosity, I mean, invaluable to us as antiquaries. [...] It is the original roll of the Earls of Warwick, as long as my gallery, and drawn by John Rous himself — ay, and what is more, there are portraits of Richard III, his queen and son, the two former corresponding almost exactly with my print, and a panegyric on the virtues of Richard and a satire upwards and downwards, on the illegal marriage of Edward IV and on the extortions of Henry VII.⁸⁵

Three months later, on 20 July 1768, Walpole again wrote to Cole noting that Hearne had mentioned the roll is his *Historia regum Angliae*.⁸⁶ In October of that year it was still a topic of correspondence, this time with the Scottish judge and historian Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes (1726–92), who had first written to Walpole regarding the portraits in *Historic Doubts*.⁸⁷ Even as late as July 1780 Walpole received information from the lawyer and writer George Hardinge (1743–1816) about his own father having seen thirty years and more before ‘an ancient pedigree, finely illuminated, of the Earls of Warwick, to whom, by the line of Monthermer, the Montagus pretend to be related’.⁸⁸

The attentions of Hearne and Walpole meant that by the turn of the century Rous had become an acknowledged resource for the historical study of English heraldry, though the presentation of small groups of individual plates of the rolls’ drawings did little to foster a coherent understanding of his work. The garishly coloured picture of Richard III taken from the Latin roll reproduced in James Dallaway’s study of English heraldry (1793) is a prime example of the increasing tendency to mine Rous’s works for appropriate images regardless of context.⁸⁹ Nineteenth-century genealogists too made recourse to the rolls but, following Walpole, they were prone to dispute earlier assessments of Rous’s fidelity and accuracy. In the early 1830s George F. Beltz (1774–1841), Lancaster Herald at the College of Arms and a widely respected genealogist whose researches had led

⁸⁵ *Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. by Lewis and others, I, 133–34.

⁸⁶ *Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. by Lewis and others, I, 147.

⁸⁷ *Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. by Lewis and others, XV, 122–24.

⁸⁸ *Walpole’s Correspondence*, ed. by Lewis and others, XXXV, 606. Walpole’s reply (on or around 20 July 1780), in which he told Hardinge that he had already seen the pedigree, is lost.

⁸⁹ James Dallaway, *Inquiries into the origin and progress of the science of Heraldry in England with explanatory observations on armorial ensigns* (Gloucester: R. Raikes for T. Cadell, 1793), plate 8 (between pp. 132 and 133).

to prosecutions for forgery and imposture, was working for Henry Pelham-Clinton, fourth Duke of Newcastle.⁹⁰ Discovering discrepancies with his own assessment of an aspect of the Duke's pedigree he wrote that Rous was 'frequently & justly impugned by Dugdale and other genealogists'.⁹¹ This is a harsh assessment and misrepresents Dugdale, but it typifies changing attitudes to Rous amongst post-seventeenth-century antiquarians.

As Rous's currency in one form became debased so his stock rose in other quarters. In the years before the publication of Courthope's 1857 facsimile he came to the attention of important London publisher-antiquarians who looked to bring him to the attention of a wider reading public. John Gough Nichols (1806–73) was part of a dynasty of publishers and printers known for its support of literary and historical projects, and as proprietors of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.⁹² Both his father John Bowyer Nichols (1779–1863) and grandfather John Nichols (1745–1826) had made enviable reputations as editors and antiquaries, and John Gough carried on the family's promotion of antiquarian titles, especially county and local histories. An expert palaeographer and Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries from 1835, he was a regular contributor to the proceedings of learned societies. For the *Gentleman's Magazine* under his father's editorship he produced numerous articles on archaeological and antiquarian topics, including in 1845 observations on John Rous accompanied by a plate of the author's portrait from the Latin roll in the College of Arms. Much of this is a rehearsal of the comments of Dugdale and Walpole, but his personal remarks are an important witness to changing scholarly interests: 'His History of the Earls of Warwick, in the form of a pictorial roll, is a work of high curiosity, not so much for its apocryphal and frequently erroneous contents, as for the singular series of drawings with which it is illustrated.'⁹³ Interest in Rous extended to the Nicholsons' associates, especially the publisher and bookseller William Pickering (1796–1854) whose greatest

⁹⁰ See Thomas Woodcock, 'Beltz, George Frederick (1774–1841)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/2071>> (accessed 19 September 2005).

⁹¹ This letter, dated 12 April 1834, is now in the Newcastle (Clumber) Collection at Nottingham (Nottingham University Library, Ne 5 G 12/5).

⁹² Julian Pooley and Robin Myers, 'Nichols family (per. c.1760–1939)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/63494>> (accessed 19 September 2005).

⁹³ J. G. N., 'John Rous, the Antiquary, of Warwick', *Gentleman's Magazine*, n.s., 23 (1845), 475–80 (p. 478).

legacy is the introduction of affordable cloth binding. Pickering had strong literary and antiquarian interests and had made his name with editions of both classical and contemporary writers in the 1820s and 1830s; from 1834 he co-edited of the *Gentleman's Magazine* with Nichols's father. By the 1840s he had moved to producing elegant decorative editions with extensive plates.⁹⁴ Walton's *The Compleat Angler* (1836) appeared in a particularly lavish edition and was followed by ever more elaborate titles, including Shaw's two-volume *Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages* (1843) that had an improbable ninety-four coloured plates. The precise moment of his contact with Rous is obscure, but 1845 saw plans for a quarto edition of the English roll showing Rous's sixty-four portraits and shield coats-of-arms, with a hand-coloured frontispiece and thirty-two hand-coloured plates.⁹⁵ Pickering chose his editors with great care and sought out established antiquaries and theologians to produce his editions. One such was the distinguished Kent clergyman Lambert Larking (1797–1868), who was tasked with providing the transcription, heraldic descriptions, and historical notes of the English roll.⁹⁶ Sadly Pickering's 'reckless liberality' towards production costs, combined with a tendency to wild overprinting, engendered a financial crisis in 1845 and the publication of the roll was shelved.⁹⁷ After Pickering's death the publisher Henry Bohn (1796–1884) acquired the unissued sheets from Pickering's estate, and in 1859 the title appeared under Courthope's stewardship in an edition of just one hundred, of which less than twenty contained the hand-coloured plates:

The Publication of the following curious Roll, from one in the possession of His Grace the Duke of Manchester, was undertaken by the late Mr. William Pickering, in the year 1845, but, from accidental circumstances, left unfinished at his decease in 1854. Upon the sale and dispersion of his property, the impression, as far as completed, came into the hands of Mr. Henry G. Bohn, and to that gentleman's spirit of enterprise and zeal in the

⁹⁴ Bernard Warrington, 'William Pickering, his Authors and Interests: A Publisher and the Literary Scene in the Early Nineteenth Century', *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library*, 69 (1987), 572–628.

⁹⁵ Nichols notes that 'another copy of this roll has been discovered among a nobleman's muniments, and Mr Pickering is now preparing to publish it in fac-simile. We are informed that the drawings are more highly finished, or in better preservation, than those in the Roll at the College of Arms' (J. G. N., 'John Rous, the Antiquary, of Warwick', p. 478).

⁹⁶ Larking was known to both Pickering and J. G. Nichols and had contributed to the 1837 edition of the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

⁹⁷ Bernard Warrington, 'The Bankruptcy of William Pickering in 1853: The Hazards of Publishing and Bookselling in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century', *Publishing History*, 27 (1990), 5–25 (p. 18).

cause of Literature, it is owing that this pictorial Chronicle is at length given to the Public.⁹⁸

Such care and expense was a fitting tribute to five hundred years of study of such a 'diligent searcher of Antiquities' as John Rous.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ *This rol was laburd & finishid by Maistre John Rows of Warrewyk*, ed. by Courthope, preface.

⁹⁹ Dugdale 14, p. vii.

Part Four
Corpus Studies

THE MANUSCRIPTS OF THE WEST MIDLANDS CATALOGUE PROJECT

Rebecca Farnham

*Manuscripts of the West Midlands (MWM)*¹ is a Web-based catalogue containing searchable descriptions and reference images of over 150 manuscripts in which one or more texts have been located by dialect to the West Midlands counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire. Covering the period *c.* 1300–*c.* 1475 the catalogue bears witness to textual and linguistic trends and changes in manuscript production over nearly two hundred years and contains some of the most important manuscript books in Middle English. These books range from late thirteenth-century and early fourteenth-century trilingual manuscripts (with a French and Latin bias) such as BL, MS Harley 2253 and Bodleian, MS Digby 86 to late fourteenth-century books containing mainly English texts such as Bodleian, MS Eng. poet. a. 1 (the Vernon manuscript, soon to be the subject of a digital facsimile) and late fifteenth-century books containing solely English texts such as BL, MS Additional 11307.² Hundreds of texts have been recorded in the catalogue from religious devotional and didactic texts such as the *South English Legendary*, *Piers Plowman*, and Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*, to secular texts

¹ *Manuscripts of the West Midlands: A Catalogue of Vernacular Manuscript Books of the English West Midlands, c. 1300 – c. 1475* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2006) <<http://www.mwm.bham.ac.uk>>. The project was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board (subsequently the Arts and Humanities Research Council). Research for and writing of the catalogue entries was carried out by Rebecca Farnham and Orietta Da Rold.

² For the Vernon Manuscript Project see <<http://www.english.bham.ac.uk/medievalstudies/vernon/>>.

and lyrics such as Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle*, *The Owl and the Nightingale*, and *The Fair Maid of Ribblesdale*. There is also a large range of lesser-known prose texts, for example, herbals such as the *Agnus Castus* and many medical texts, including treatises on urines and many recipes for common ailments including headaches, gout, and toothache.

The project catalogues manuscripts that include one or more texts copied by a person or persons whose English was of the West Midlands variety, as identified by the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Middle English* (LALME). It was recognized from the start that the inclusion in a book of a text or texts copied in a West Midlands dialect is not of itself proof of production or use in the area. Undoubtedly, there are books in the catalogue that we can say were almost certainly copied by local scribes, such as Eng. poet. a. 1 (Vernon), BL, MS Additional 22283 (Simeon), BL, MS Additional 37787 (John Northwood's Miscellany), and Harley 2253, copied by a Ludlow scribe.³ But there are many more which bear witness to the dissemination of texts and the migration of scribes, such as Oxford, St John's College, MS 94, which contains the *Hours of the Virgin*, written and illuminated by John Lacy, a friar-recluse of the Dominicans of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The catalogue also includes a number of manuscripts that contain texts copied in more than one dialect or are associated with other regions on different grounds. The resulting catalogue is therefore a corpus of data with which we might begin to ask large-scale questions about the geographies and histories of manuscript production. It emphatically does not provide us with a simple conspectus of West Midlands books.

The project was to create detailed descriptions of each manuscript, by collating published descriptions and by examining the manuscripts themselves wherever possible. Each manuscript description in *MWM* contains an account of the manuscript's contents and physical properties as well as a record of any extra-textual inscriptions denoting ownership/use and a comprehensive bibliography. Thus, each record in *MWM* carries a listing of the individual manuscript's contents, recording, where appropriate, for each item the rubric, incipit, explicit and colophon, supplemented by *IMEV* or *IPMEP* references as appropriate, and individual bibliographies. For example, the first item in BL Add. 37787 is recorded as follows:

³ For Northwood's miscellany, see Rebecca Farnham, 'The Producers and Readers of London, British Library, Additional MS 37787' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Birmingham, 2003); for Harley 2253, see the essays by Fein and Revard in this volume.

Item 1

- Locus:** ff. 3^r–11^v
- Title:** Form of Confession (IPMEP 309)
- Rubric:** ‘Here is a goode confession That teches man to saluacion How
Pat man shalle shryue him here To teche him wellle the manere’.
- Incipit:** ‘I knowleche me gulti and yelde me to god’.
- Explicit:** ‘Hartilech for þe conuersacion of enmyes and also for þe
parseueraunce of frendes’.
- Rubric:** ‘Hec confessio prescripta compilatur non ut quilibet eam totam
dicat sed ut ea in quibus se reum esse cognoscit confiteatur’.
- Language:** English
Printed in Baugh 1956, pp. 87–95.

The physical properties of each manuscript are recorded in the following fields: form, support, extent, collation, layout, writing, decoration, binding, foliation, additions, and condition, as in the following example, Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth 395D:

Physical Description

- Form:** Codex
- Support:** Parchment
- Extent:** 260 x 135–140mm
- Collation:** Catchwords on ff. 12^v, 24^v, 36^v, 48^v, 60^v, 72^v, 84^v, 96^v, 108^v,
120^v, 142^v, 154^v, 164^v
- Layout:** *Speculum*: writing space: 220–225 x 95–110 mm. Single
columns with 48 lines. Ruling in crayon.
- Writing:** One scribe writing in an Anglicana script. Characteristics:
double compartment *a*; reversed circular *e*; sigma *s* in initial
position; long *s* in medial position; looped descender of *b*
almost giving the appearance of a figure of 8; y-shaped *þ*.
- Decoration:** Very little decoration apart from two/three-line red lombardic
initials on ff. 68^r–93^r.
- Binding:** Not medieval.
- Foliation:** ff. 175.
- Additions:** The medical recipes have been added at the end of the manu-
script but in the same hand as that of the main part of the
manuscript.
- Condition:** Some staining.

Under the heading 'History' the origin, provenance, and acquisition of the manuscript are recorded, where appropriate, as in the example from BL Add. 22283:

History

History: Unknown

Provenance: Sixteenth century: f. 172^{vb}, foot, 'Awdri Norwood' in good Elizabethan italic. Inscription on f. 91^r previously thought to be 'Joan bohun' but doubted by Doyle who thinks that the inscription could just be a comment (Doyle 1987, p. 16, pl. 8). The inscription is no longer visible to the naked eye.

Acquisition: Purchased by the British Library from Sir John Simeon 13 February 1858.

A further field records related manuscripts or other documents that bear relevance to the manuscript's history, as exemplified by the entry from the same manuscript:

Related Manuscripts and other documents

Textual: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. a. 1 is thought to be the sister copy of this manuscript (Doyle 1987, pp. 1–16). Lewis and McIntosh assign this manuscript to their Group 4 for the *Prick of Conscience* (1982, p. 74).

Scribal: Scribe 2 of Oxford, Bodleian Library, Eng. poet. a. 1 (Vernon) is Scribe 2 of this manuscript (Doyle 1987, p. 13).

Although these descriptions are based on published sources a major element of the project was to visit as many manuscripts as possible in order to check and where possible supplement extant descriptions.

The structure of the catalogue allows the user to search *MWM* in a variety of ways. The descriptions are tagged in Extensible Mark-up Language (XML) in accordance with the recommendations of the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI).⁴ The tagging is not seen by the user, but its presence means that the data can be presented on the screen in a variety of formats. Manuscript descriptions are selected by shelfmark from an alphabetical list organized by repository. The user can also search a list of titles, because the titles of all texts contained within the database have been marked up in XML to allow them to become 'visible'. By clicking on 'Title' on a side menu, the user can see all titles listed alphabetically; thus 'A' begins with *Acts* and ends with *Ay Mercy, God* (IMEV374). The user can

⁴ For the Text Encoding Initiative and its guidelines, see <<http://www.tei-c.org.uk/>>.

therefore see a complete list of texts beginning with the letter ‘A’ contained in all manuscripts included in the catalogue. By using this facility it is possible to find out how many manuscripts contain a particular text. Under ‘A’, for example, the herbal *Agnus Castus* appears, and if the user by clicks on this title *MWM* reveals that it appears in four manuscripts:

Titles

Home **Agnus Castus (IPMEP 38)**

About MWM

* [London, British Library, Additional 4698](#)

Manuscripts * [London, British Library, Arundel 272](#)

Images * [London, British Library, Sloane 3160](#)

Titles * [Oxford, Bodleian Library, Laud Misc. 553](#)

Persons

Bindings

Search

The absence of agreed titles for most medieval texts means that an alphabetical list of titles will not always be the best way to locate a text. Another way of searching for a particular text is to complete the *IMEV* or *IPMEP* fields in the main search form. For example, if the user wants to find out in which manuscripts the text *IMEV* 2119 (*Prayer to the Virgin*) appears, ‘2119’ can be entered into the box, and the results show that the text is found in three manuscripts. The results detail the manuscript shelfmark, the folio numbers of the text in each manuscript, the title and incipit:

1. [London, British Library, Additional 37787](#)
56^v–157^v Prayer to the Virgin (IMEV 2119) ‘Mari modur wel þe be’
2. [London, British Library, Royal 17 A.xxvii](#)
83^v Prayer to the Virgin (IMEV 2119) ‘Marie modur wel þe be’
3. [Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lyell 30](#)
42^r–143^r Prayer to the Virgin (IMEV 2119) ‘Mary moder well thou be’

A further way of searching for a particular text is to enter a word from the incipit in the Free Text search field.

Within the manuscript descriptions are details of any evidence for owners and readers, such as ownership inscriptions. *MWM* allows the user to search for owners and readers in two ways. Names of persons associated with the manuscripts as owners or users have been marked up in the description and this allows the

name to appear in an alphabetical list accessible by clicking 'Person' on the menu bar. For example, under *N* we find 'Northwood, John'. Clicking on this name takes us to the list of manuscripts in which the name is found (in this particular instance only one, BL Add. 37787). Clicking on the name takes us to the manuscript description and then to the point in the text where the name is to be found. In this case 'John Northwood' can be found under the entry for 'Provenance' where it is stated that an inscription recording his novitiate at Bordesley Abbey in 1386 is written in the manuscript (possibly in Northwood's hand) along with a malediction against anyone taking the book from him against his permission:

Provenance: Inscription recording novitiate of John Northwood at Bordesley Abbey in 1386, f. 182^v, 'Anno domini milesimo CCC octogesimo sexto. In die sancti augustini anglorum apostolic' intrauit domum probacionis beate marie de bordesley ffrater iohannes norþwode quem in uia religionis assumpte deuotissime custodiat trinitas sancta nunc & in perpetuum. Amen'.

Searching by means of the persons list would be most appropriate for discovering the names of persons associated with manuscripts in the catalogue. If a particular name is sought then, in the second search method, simply typing in the name in the 'Free Text' search element will reveal in which manuscripts a particular name can be found. Where non-standard orthography (norþwode/northwood) makes searching for names difficult, using a combination of both methods may be most helpful.

One aim of the project was to record as much information about the production of the book as possible. To this end it was decided that this would not only include the preparation of the folios, their pricking and ruling, and the copying and decorating of texts, but also the binding of the finished quires. The binding of each book was therefore physically examined where possible with the findings being recorded in the 'Binding' field. Unfortunately, due to the ravages of time, there are only thirteen manuscript books still retaining their original medieval bindings, all of which have been listed under 'Binding' on the search menu. Again, clicking on any one of the manuscript shelfmarks listed will take the user to the description. One example is the record for Bodleian, MS Laud Misc. 463:

Binding: Medieval binding. Size: 356 x 235 mm. Cover of wooden/oak boards covered in what was red leather but now faded to white with dirty brown on top, mitred and pasted. Back pastedown has come off revealing the binder's work beneath. Six staggered channels carrying double leather thongs held in place by wooden pegs,

channels either 3 or 4 cm long. Six raised bands on double thongs across the spine. Evidence of three straps on front cover and one on the back cover. No exterior decoration.

Many of the manuscripts in *MWM* are decorated and some are illuminated; most carry at least coloured initials and paraphs to mark out the text. Where possible the decoration of each manuscript has been recorded, the catalogue entries including descriptions of features such as miniatures, historiated initials, borders, initials, and paraphs. To make this information as accessible as possible it was decided to provide an advanced search facility. The Search Form permits searching on Borders, Diagrams, Initials, and Miniatures, and within those categories permits free-text categories to be added as search parameters. For example, by choosing the Border key and then typing in 'orange' in the Free Text field it is possible to search the descriptions of all of the borders for the use of orange pigment. This reveals that the word 'orange' is used in the border descriptions twenty-one times in five manuscripts: Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 1285; BL, MS Harley 210; BL Add. 22283; BL Add. 37787; and Eng. poet. a. 1. Clicking on an individual hit will take the user to the manuscript description where the description of the decoration can be found under 'Physical Description'.

This particular example illustrates the potential of the catalogue for supporting research on the production relations between manuscripts, relations both within a particular field (shared scribes, texts, decorative style) and across those fields. The use of orange is confined to a number of manuscripts that are already known to be related to one another on other grounds: BL Add. 37787 (Northwood), BL Add. 22283, and Eng. poet. a. 1. These manuscripts are known to share scribes (Vernon and Simeon) and texts (Vernon and Simeon; Vernon and Northwood). It is possibly significant that Harley 210 shares texts with BL Add. 37787 and Eng. poet. a. 1, namely *Confession to Jesus Christ/Prayer of Confession* (IMEV 3231), a fact easily found out by the use of the IMEV search facility. Further, the image of folio 16^r of Trinity 1285 which is included in *MWM* brings to light other decorative similarities within this group of manuscripts. The initial *S* is embellished with sprays of feathering with green tinted lobes with each spray carrying a pair of cone-like motifs and also terminating with a cone motif. By using the 'Free Text' search and entering the term 'cone' there are eight hits including BL Add. 37787.

Research on decoration, layout, and scribal hands is supported by the inclusion in *MWM* of over one hundred images. Where possible reference images have been included for each manuscript, and in some cases two or three images are included,

for example BL Add. 22283 and Eng. poet. a. 1, each of which has three images. (Unfortunately, owing to reproduction restrictions and other factors it has not been possible to provide an image for each manuscript.) The user can access the images in two ways, either through the 'Image' key on the left-hand navigation menu or through the navigation bar within the manuscript description. Once the chosen image is on the screen, the user may examine it closely using navigation and zoom buttons. One feature of the design of *MWM* is that the user is able to compare two images on the screen at the same time. The comparative facility is intended to support comparisons of features such as decorative styles, layouts, and scripts.

The *MWM* project is an experiment with the kinds of data handling we will need to meet the future needs of manuscript studies. Its uses are by no means confined to, or even mainly concerned with, research questions of a traditional 'geographical' kind. Indeed, one of its prime uses may be to help us to formulate better questions, and research programmes, to understand the complexities of manuscript production and use. The online introduction sums up these aims of the project in this way: 'the *MWM* project has aimed to engage with the dynamics of manuscript studies, a fast-developing discipline, and to experiment with the potential of computer applications to provide new kinds of research infrastructure. Although completed in the sense that the project has ended, the catalogue is provisional and experimental and amenable for future exploitation and development with the possibility of extension into other geographical areas. It is hoped that *MWM* will stimulate, and provide a resource for, research of many kinds.'

MIDDLE ENGLISH ROMANCE AND THE WEST MIDLANDS

Alison Wiggins

The traditional geography of Middle English literature encourages a perception of the 'regionality' of West Midlands romance. There is an association between the west and alliterative forms, as well as with well-known figures such as Gawain and Guy whose stories memorably portray western locales, the Wirral and Warwick. The aim of this chapter is to review these general perceptions through consideration of the extant corpus of Middle English romance manuscripts. In what ways does the information from the manuscripts confirm or complicate the traditional view? How can patterns or conclusions from the manuscript evidence enrich our understanding of reading and writing romance in this region? And how does the geography of romance composition compare with the available information relating to the subsequent copying and circulation of romance texts?

The Corpus

Fifteen manuscripts appear both in Gisela Guddat-Figge's *Catalogue of Middle English romance manuscripts* and in the catalogue of the 'Vernacular Manuscript Books of the West Midlands Project'.¹ The West Midlands Project selects

¹ Gisela Guddat-Figge, *Catalogue of Manuscripts Containing Middle English Romances* (Munich: W. Fink, 1976). The project pages for the 'AHRC Electronic Catalogue of Vernacular Manuscript Books of the Medieval West Midlands Project' are hosted by the University of Birmingham, Department of English <<http://www.english.bham.ac.uk/>> (accessed on 5 September 2005). See now *Manuscripts of the West Midlands: A Catalogue of Vernacular Manuscript Books*

manuscripts primarily on linguistic grounds: a manuscript is included if the language of at least one of its scribes or texts is mapped by the *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* (LALME) within Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, or Worcestershire.² The fifteen manuscripts are as follows:³

- Cambridge, King's College, MS 13 (*William of Palerne*. LP 7160, Gloucs.)
- Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 1117 (O. 2. 13) (*Bevis of Hamptoun*. LP 322, Cheshire; the language of a second scribe is described as 'mixed but one element may be assigned to Salop'.)
- Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MS 19. 2. 1 ('Auchinleck') (*Amis and Amiloun, King of Tars, Sir Degare, Floris and Blaunche-flour, Guy of Warwick, Reinburn, Bevis of Hamptoun, Of Arthour and Merlin, Lay le Freine, Roland and Vernague, Otuel, Kyng Alisaunder, Sir Tristrem, Sir Orfeo, Horn Childe, Richard*. Hand B is LP 6940, language of Gloucs./Worcs. border; Hand F (*Otuel*) is LP 7820, Worcs.)
- London, British Library, MS Additional 10036 (*Titus and Vespasian*. LP 4063, Warwicks.)
- London, British Library, MS Additional 22283 ('Simeon') (*Robert of Sicily, King of Tars*. See the LALME entry for the Vernon manuscript, below.)
- London, British Library, MS Additional 36983 ('Bedford') (*Titus and Vespasian*. LP 4689, Warwicks.)
- London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius D. III (*Floris and Blaunche-flour*. LP 7120, Gloucs.)
- London, British Library, MS Harley 2253 (*King Horn*. LP 9260, Herefords.)
- London, British Library, MS Harley 3810/i (*Sir Orfeo*. LP 7901, Warwicks.)
- London, British Library, MS Harley 4733 (*Titus and Vespasian*. LP 7600, Worcs., and LP 4681 Warwicks.)

of the English West Midlands, c. 1300 – c. 1475 (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2006) <<http://www.mwm.bham.ac.uk>>.

² The present study follows the West Midlands Project in regarding these six counties as constituting the West Midlands.

³ BL, MS Royal 17. B. XLIII is also included in both catalogues. However, it has been excluded here because this is a composite manuscript and the section containing *Sir Gowther* cannot be connected with the West Midlands on the grounds of provenance or ownership, nor can its language be mapped to this area (the West Midlands LP is from a different section of the manuscript).

London, Lincoln's Inn, MS Hale 150 (*Lybeaus Desconus, Arthour and Merlin, Kyng Alisaunder, the Seege of Troye*. LP 4037, Salop.)

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 78 (*Titus and Vespasian*. LP 7350, Herefords.)

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Eng. poet. a. 1 ('Vernon') (*Robert of Sicily, King of Tars*. LP 7630, Worcs.)

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108 (*Havelok, King Horn*. *LALME* concludes that the 'language is mixed, and suggest a western (probably Gloucs.) original, with an East Anglian overlay'.)

San Marino, Huntington Library, MS HM 128 (*Siege of Jerusalem*. Hand A is LP 8040, Warwicks. Hand B (*Siege of Jerusalem*) is LP 6910, Warwicks.)

Additionally, two more manuscripts are of interest because their language can be mapped to the West Midlands and they are known to have circulated there:

Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Brogyntyn II.1 (Porkington MS 10) (*Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle*)

London, British Library, MS Harley 2386/ii (*Amis and Amiloun*)

They are not included in the West Midlands Project because Porkington 10 does not feature in *LALME* and Harley 2386/ii is misleadingly localized there to Devon.⁴

These seventeen manuscripts are the focus of this chapter. Perhaps inevitably, some fulfil the criteria for inclusion — of being 'West Midlands' and 'romance' manuscripts — more fully than others. Seven edge their way onto the list because they contain one or two texts written in romance mode, although these might more appropriately be described as religious narratives (*Titus and Vespasian, Siege of Jerusalem*) or didactic fables (*Robert of Sicily, King of Tars*).⁵ Certain

⁴ Language and provenance associate Porkington 10 with Shropshire and Caernarfonshire; see Daniel Huws, 'MS Porkington 10 and its Scribes', in *Romance Reading on the Book: Essays on Medieval Narrative*, ed. by Jennifer Fellows, Rosalind Field, Gillian Rogers, and Judith Weiss (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1996), pp. 188–207. Harley 2386/ii is localized by *LALME* within Devon (LP 5040 and LP 5090), but more detailed analysis of the language, marginalia, and inscriptions confirms that the language of *Amis and Amiloun* should be mapped within the West Midlands and that this text was added by a scribe-owner located in Herefordshire; see note 8 below, and E. Lawson, 'Studies in the Dialect and Palaeographical Materials of the Medieval West Country' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, 2002).

⁵ Guddat-Figge is hesitant over the generic status of *Titus and Vespasian*, although her decision to exclude certain manuscripts seems primarily due to her difficulties in accessing North

ambiguities are also presented by the linguistic evidence. Trinity O. 2. 13, for example, is a collection of medical recipes containing traces of the language of Cheshire and Shropshire, to which lines from *Bevis of Hamptoun* were added at some later date. The rather scanty traces of West Midlands dialect forms, paired with the uncertain relationship of the romance fragment to the rest of the book, weaken its eligibility for inclusion here. These borderline cases have been included for the sake of completeness and in order to remain consistent with the catalogue of the West Midlands Project and Guddat-Figge. They also serve to provide a sense of the spectrum of books that might be classified as 'West Midlands romance manuscripts' and to mark the boundaries of such a category.

It is also important to emphasize that these seventeen books vary in terms of their proximity to and relationship with the West Midlands. *LALME* maps *language*, not scribes, authors, books, or owners. It is well known that scribes, books, and booklets were mobile and that, even when the language of a manuscript can be localized, this does not necessarily coincide with place of production or of reception. On the other hand, when the language of a text can be localized it still remains *possible* that the manuscript was also produced or received in the same region. Scribes and books could move, sometimes several times, but they could also remain in one area over an extended period. This mixed situation is illustrated by the sample under consideration here: ten of the seventeen manuscripts, or their scribes or owners, are known to have been located in the West Midlands.⁶ From the fourteenth century, Harley 2253 was produced in the region of Ludlow, Shropshire; King's College 13 was produced near to Gloucester; and Vernon and Simeon are most likely to have been destined for a Cistercian religious house in

American archives; see Guddat-Figge, *Catalogue*, p. 41. The *Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050–1500*, ed. by J. B. Severs (New Haven: Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences, 1967), includes all of these texts in vol. 1: *Romances*.

⁶ The task of locating manuscripts and scribes, as opposed to language, presents its own challenges. These have been subjected to detailed discussion by, among others, Richard Beadle, 'Prolegomena to a Literary Geography of Later Medieval Norfolk', in *Regionalism in Late Medieval Manuscripts and Texts: Essays Celebrating the Publication of 'A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English'*, ed. by Felicity Riddy (Cambridge: Brewer, 1991), pp. 89–108; and Elizabeth Salter, *Fourteenth-Century English Poetry: Contexts and Readings* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), chapter 3, 'Mappings', pp. 52–85. Localization requires an approach which integrates different categories of evidence and takes account of linguistic information alongside data from a range of sources that include provenance, marginalia, biographical information about scribes and owners, consideration of textual tradition and associated texts, as well as information from physical features of the manuscript which may relate to locality, such as decoration.

the region of north Worcestershire.⁷ Analysis of content, marginalia, and ownership inscriptions has been used to locate Harley 2386 in Herefordshire, Harley 3810 in Warwickshire, Harley 4733 in Worcester, and Lincoln's Inn 150 and Porkington 10 in Shropshire, all of them manuscripts from the fifteenth century.⁸ Of the remaining manuscripts, Auchinleck and Huntington HM 128 are both believed to have been produced in London; the two earliest manuscripts (Cotton Vitellius D. III and Laud Misc. 108) remain enigmatic, as do the three other manuscripts of *Titus and Vespasian* (BL Add. 10036, the Bedford manuscript, and Douce 78) and the medical collection (Trinity O. 2. 13).⁹

Of the extant romance manuscripts written in language that can be mapped to the West Midlands, then, a good portion of these were also copied and/or received in this area. Where this is not the case, we know that on at least two occasions the manuscript was produced in London. Six manuscripts remain anonymous and

⁷ The genesis of Harley 2253 is discussed by Carter Revard, 'Scribe and Provenance', in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript: The Scribes, Contents, and Social Contexts of British Library MS Harley 2253*, ed. by Susanna Fein (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), pp. 21–109. Internal evidence combined with analysis of visual features confirm that King's College 13 was copied close to the place where the text is thought to have been composed in Gloucestershire; see A. I. Doyle, 'The Manuscripts', in *Middle English Alliterative Poetry and its Literary Background*, ed. by D. A. Lawton (Cambridge: Brewer, 1982), pp. 88–100 (pp. 90–91). A full assessment of the production and purpose of the Vernon and Simeon manuscripts is provided by A. I. Doyle in his introduction to *The Vernon Manuscript: A Facsimile of Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Eng. Poet. a.1* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1987).

⁸ Harley 2386 was owned and partly copied by Wylliam Cressett of Herefordshire whose marginal jottings refer to Hereford and nearby Dinedor. Harley 3810 (language of Warwicks.) was in the possession of 'Willielmi Shaw clerici et Cur' de Baddesly Clinton: Ecclesia' in Warwickshire. Harley 4733 (language of Worcs. and Warwicks.) was owned by 'John Penyngton' of Worcester. Lincoln's Inn 150 (language of Salop.) came to be owned by Fitzalan dependant Anthony Foster of Wimbold's Trafford, a few miles north-east of Chester; see *The Seege or Batayle of Troye*, ed. by M. E. Barnicle, EETS, o.s., 172 (London: Oxford University Press, 1927 for 1926); and Ralph Hanna, 'Two New (?) Lost Piers Manuscripts (?)', *Yearbook of Langland Studies*, 16 (2002), 169–77. The connection of Porkington 10 with Shropshire and the Welsh borders is discussed by Huws, 'MS Porkington 10 and its Scribes'.

⁹ For summaries of the scholarship on Auchinleck, see *The Auchinleck Manuscript*, ed. by David Burnley and Alison Wiggins (National Library of Scotland Digital Library, July 2003) <<http://www.nls.uk/auchinleck/>> (accessed on 5 September 2005); and Ralph Hanna, 'Reconsidering the Auchinleck Manuscript', in *New Directions in Later Medieval Manuscript Studies: Essays From the 1998 Harvard Conference*, ed. by Derek Pearsall (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer in association with York Medieval Press and University of York Centre for Medieval Studies, 2000), pp. 91–102. On Huntington HM 128, see Doyle, 'The Manuscripts', p. 94.

unlocalized. Further research may reveal romance manuscripts in other dialects that circulated in the West Midlands, although examples of these are not currently known. The correlation between dialect and place in this group of manuscripts is, in part, a reflection of the high proportion of owner-user manuscripts: books that were produced by and for the same person or community. However, as the following discussion shows, this does not in any way suggest a situation that was static or sealed off from other regions.

Romance Transmission and Exemplar Availability

In order to achieve a sense of what is distinctive about the production and reception of romance in the West Midlands, it is first necessary to make some comparison with other regions and with the larger corpus of Middle English romance manuscripts. The seventeen manuscripts here designated as having West Midlands affiliations constitute slightly under one sixth of the extant corpus of c. 106 manuscripts of Middle English romance.¹⁰ One distinguishing feature of the West Midlands group is the relatively high proportion of early (pre-1400) manuscripts. A total of only seventeen romance manuscripts were produced before 1400, of which seven have West Midlands affiliations: Harley 2253, King's College 13, Vernon, and Simeon (all produced in the West Midlands), Auchinleck (produced in London), and Cotton Vitellius D. III and Laud Misc. 108 (unlocalized). In addition to Auchinleck, which was produced in London, four of these manuscripts include romances believed to have been originally composed in the south-east or east Midlands: *Floris and Blaunche flour*, *King of Tars*, *Havelok*, and *Robert of Sicily*.¹¹ Although any conclusions from these few manuscripts can only be

¹⁰ This figure of 106 romance manuscripts is based on the ninety-nine manuscripts in Guddat-Figge's *Catalogue* plus the four *Titus and Vespasian* manuscripts and the one *Siege of Jerusalem* manuscript she excludes (Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys 2014; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 898; Connecticut, John Osborn, MS 32; Cleveland Public Library, MS; Princeton University Library, R. H. Taylor MS 11). Added to these are the recently discovered fragments of the *Siege of Jerusalem* (Exeter, Devon Record Office, MS 2507) and *Bevis of Hamptoun* (Bodleian, MS Eng. poet. d. 208); see Michael Swanton, 'A Further Manuscript of *The Siege of Jerusalem*', *Scriptorium*, 44 (1990), 103–04; and Ralph Hanna, 'Unnoticed Middle English Romance Fragments in the Bodleian Library: MS Eng. Poet. d. 208', *The Library*, 21 (1999), 305–20.

¹¹ The region of composition given in the *Manual*, ed. by Severs, is followed except where this is superseded by a subsequent edition or study, in which case a note is provided. Region of

tentative, their existence is indicative of activity in the region and suggestive of active links between west and east at an early date.¹²

None of the romances in these fourteenth-century manuscripts is known to have been copied again in this region in the fifteenth century. However, there is continuity in the sense that, in both periods, the romances in the West Midlands corpus derive either from the West Midlands or from the south-east or east Midlands. After 1400, two romances were produced and received in the West Midlands that are also thought to have been composed there (the *Seege of Troye* in Lincoln's Inn 150, and *Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle* in Porkington 10) and a larger constituent is believed to be south-east or east Midlands in origin (*Bevis of Hamptoun* in Trinity O. 2. 13; *Sir Orfeo* in Harley 3810; *Lybeaus Descornus*, *Of Arthour and Merlin*, and *Kyng Alisaunder* in Lincoln's Inn 150; *Richard* in BL, MS Harley 4690; and *Titus and Vespasian* in Harley 4733). Moreover, that this collocation of western- and south-eastern-derived romances is particularly characteristic of the West Midlands is implied by comparison with other regions after 1400.

The north, for example, is quite distinct from the West Midlands in this respect. The eight manuscripts known to have been produced in the north in the fifteenth century (in Yorkshire, Lancashire, or further north) contain a total of twenty-one romance texts, of which nineteen are thought to have originated in

composition is estimated using a combination of different categories of evidence: rhyme-word dialect, verse form, textual affiliations, internal place-name references, and descriptions of particular locales. Only occasionally, as in the case of *William of Palerne*, is there a direct reference to a patron or composer. Of course, for some romances it is not possible to talk about one single point of composition. *Guy of Warwick*, for instance, was translated into English at least four times by independent redactors writing in different dialects and most likely in different parts of the country. In other cases, such as *Bevis of Hamptoun*, the extant texts may be ultimately derived from one translation but differ radically from one another as a result of successive revision. *King of Tars* and *Robert of Sicily* should be mentioned in this respect: although the rhyme words suggest both were composed in south-easterly language, each clearly went on to circulate widely and was subject to free adaptation. In such cases it can be more appropriate to describe composition as a process, rather than a single, isolated moment. While this is acknowledged, the concern here is with starting points and the aim is to compare the location of the romance's genesis with its subsequent copying history. For an overview of the geography of romance composition, see Derek Pearsall, 'The Development of Middle English Romance', in *Studies in Medieval English Romances: Some New Approaches*, ed. by Derek Brewer (Cambridge: Brewer, 1988), pp. 11–35.

¹² For a recent discussion of the import and export of texts between London and the west in the fourteenth century, that includes an account of the Auchinleck manuscript, see Ralph Hanna, *London Literature, 1300–1380* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 15–24.

the north or north Midlands.¹³ One third (seven out of twenty-one) are alliterative and half (ten out of twenty-one) are in tail-rhyme stanzas. Comparable with this are the seven manuscripts that can be localized within the north Midlands (in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, or Derbyshire) and contain twenty-five romance texts.¹⁴ Whereas the northern manuscripts are dominated by northern- and north-Midlands-derived texts, these north Midlands manuscripts contain much more of a mixture: sixteen of the romances are thought to originate from the north or north Midlands, but nine are from further south. Likewise, whereas the northern manuscripts are dominated by tail-rhyme and alliterative forms, in the north Midlands manuscripts it is tail-rhyme and couplet forms that predominate. There is only one alliterative romance among the north Midlands manuscripts (the *Siege of Jerusalem*) compared with seventeen in tail-rhyme stanzas and seven in couplets.

The situation in the north and north Midlands seems to have been strongly influenced by an active tradition of romance composition in this region in the years leading up to and around 1400. The composition of romances by northern and north Midlands composers in the second half of the fourteenth century (especially tail-rhyme romances such as *Sir Cleges*, *Sir Eglamour*, *Sir Degrevant*, *Sir Gowther*, *Sir Triamour*, and *The Earl of Tolous*) may have ensured the availability of exemplars within these regions into the fifteenth century and is one of the

¹³ Robert Thornton's manuscripts, Lincoln, Cathedral Library, MS 91 and BL, MS Additional 31042 (*Northern Octavian*, *Sir Degrevant*, *Sir Eglamour*, *Percyvelle of Gales*, *Prose Alexander*, *The Awntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyn*, *Alliterative Morte Arthure*, *Sir Isumbras*, *Earl of Tolous*, *Siege of Jerusalem*, *The Sege of Melayne*, *The Romance of Duke Rowland and Sir Otuell off Spayne*, *Richard*); BL, Cotton MS Galba E. IX (*Ywain and Gawain*); Bodleian, MS Digby 185, of the Hopton family of Swillington, near Leeds (*Ponthus of Galicia*); Bodleian, MS Ashmole 44 and TCD, MS 213 (both containing the *Alliterative Alexander*); the Ireland-Blackburn Manuscript (now in the Taylor collection in Princeton University Library, containing *The Awntyrs off Arthur at the Terne Wathelyne*, *Sir Amadace*, *The Awoyng of Arthur*); Princeton, Taylor 11 (*Siege of Jerusalem*).

¹⁴ Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 175/96 (*Sir Isumbras*, *Athelstan*, *Bevis of Hamptoun*, *Richard*); the Findern anthology, CUL, MS Ff. 1. 6 (*Sir Degrevant* and *Alexander Cassamus*); CUL, MS Ff. 2. 38 (*Northern Octavian*, *Sir Eglamour*, *Bone Florence of Rome*, *Sir Triamour*, *Earl of Tolous*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Bevis of Hamptoun*, *Robert of Sicily*, *Sir Degare*); the Heege manuscript, Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MS 19. 3. 1 (*Sir Gowther*, *Sir Isumbras*, *Sir Amadace*); BL, Cotton MS Vespasian E. XVI (*Siege of Jerusalem*); Royal 17. B. XLIII (*Sir Gowther*); John Rate's book, Bodleian, MS Ashmole 61 (*Earl of Tolous*, *Sir Cleges*, *Sir Isumbras*, *Lybeaus Desconus*, *Sir Orfeo*).

factors that distinguish the north and north Midlands from regions further south at this time.¹⁵

But romances composed in the north did not only circulate there. The extant corpus suggests that a number of romances composed in the north or north Midlands quickly made their way to the east Midlands, the south-east, and London. The twenty-four manuscripts produced in these regions have many affiliations with the north. They contain a fairly even mixture of romances derived from the north or north Midlands and those derived from the south-east: of the thirty-eight romance texts copied in the east, south-east, or London, fifteen (40%) were originally composed in the north and seventeen (45%) in the south or south-east.¹⁶ These include a range of couplet, alliterative, tail-rhyme, and other stanza forms. In many ways the fifteenth-century manuscripts produced in the east, south-east, and London display the most diverse mixture of romances, including examples in all verse forms and derived from a range of different localities. This should not seem surprising in view of what has been established about this region and what have been described as the 'close and continuous' relationships, the 'live connections', between London, the east, and the north-east.¹⁷

What is apparent given these observations relating to the north, north Midlands, east, and south-east is the absence of northern- and north-Midlands-derived romances among the West Midlands manuscripts. According to the extant

¹⁵ For further discussion of these romances, see Pearsall, 'Development of Middle English Romance'.

¹⁶ Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 107/176 (*Guy of Warwick*); Cambridge, Trinity College, MS O. 5. 2 (*Generides*); CUL, MS li. 4. 9 (*Robert of Sicily*); CUL, MS Mm. 5. 14 (*Siege of Jerusalem*); CUL, MS Additional 4407 (*Havelok*); Coventry, City Record Office, MS 325/1 (*Titus and Vespasian*); Devon, Bois Penrose Library, MS 6 (*Partonope*); TCD, MS 432 (*Robert of Sicily*); Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MS 19. 1. 11 (*Sir Cleges*); BL, Cotton MS Caligula A. II (*Sir Eglamour, Emaré, Southern Octavian, Sir Isumbras, Sir Launfal, Lybeaus Desconus, Siege of Jerusalem, Chevelere Assigne*); BL, MS Harley 525 (*Robert of Sicily, the Seege of Troye*); BL, MS Harley 2252 (*Lyfe of Ipomydon, Stanzaic Morte Arthur*); BL, MS Harley 6223 copied by John Stowe (*Arthour and Merlin*); London, Lambeth Palace, MS 306 owned by John Stowe (*Lybeaus Desconus*); London, Lambeth Palace, MS 491 (*Siege of Jerusalem, The Awntyrs off Arthur at the Terne Wathelyne*); Manchester, Chetham's Library, MS 8009 (*Torrent of Portyngale, Ipomadon, Bevis of Hamptoun*); Bodleian, MS Ashmole 45 (*Earl of Tolous*); Bodleian, MS Digby 230 (*Titus and Vespasian*); Bodleian, MS Douce 126 (*Titus and Vespasian*); Bodleian, MS Douce 228 (*Richard*); Bodleian, MS Rawl. C. 86 (*Landeale, The Weddyng of Sir Gawen and Dame Ragnell*); Bodleian, MS Rawl. poet. 14 (*Partonope*); Oxford, University College, MS 142 (*Sir Isumbras*); Oxford, University College, MS 188 (*Partonope*).

¹⁷ Salter, *Fourteenth-Century English Poetry*, p. 59.

corpus, northern- and north-Midlands-derived romances do not seem to have made an impression in the West Midlands. This is also found to be the case in the south-west, in romance manuscripts that can be localized to Wiltshire, Somerset, or Dorset.¹⁸ That is, the extant corpus would suggest that fifteenth-century scribes and compilers in both the West Midlands and the south-west did not have access to northern-derived tail-rhyme romance texts; or, at least, none are extant that are known to have been copied in these regions.¹⁹ Instead, the copying of romance seems to have become established in the west largely through the early availability of exemplars of much older southern- and eastern-derived romances. Three quarters (eighteen out of twenty-four) of romances in the post-1400 south-western or West Midlands manuscripts are derived from the south, south-east, east Midlands, or London.²⁰ Of the remainder, two originate from the south-west and are in south-western manuscripts (*Arthur* and *Apollonius of Tyre*) and two are from the most northerly part of the West Midlands and are in West Midlands manuscripts (*Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle* and the *Seege of Troye*). Only the *Siege of Jerusalem* is from further north and this appears in a manuscript thought to have been produced in London. In a number of cases, couplet and stanzaic romances in West Midlands manuscripts appear to have been copied directly from London or south-eastern exemplars. This appears to be the case with *Of Arthour and Merlin* and *Kyng Alisaunder* in Lincoln's Inn 150, and possibly also *Of Arthour and Merlin* in Bodleian, MS Douce 236.²¹ Copying of certain romances

¹⁸ Based on linguistic and ownership evidence, these are BL, MS Additional 35288 (*Partonope*); Harley 4690 (*Richard*); London, College of Arms, MS Arundel 58 (*Richard*); Longleat House Library, MS 55, the 'Red Book of Bath' (*Arthur*); Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS xiii. B. 29 (*Bevis of Hamptoun*, *Lybeaus Desconus*, *Sir Isumbras*); Bodleian, MS Douce 216 (*Apollonius of Tyre*).

¹⁹ That is, texts such as *Sir Cleges*, *Sir Eglamour*, *Sir Degrevant*, *Sir Gowther*, *Sir Triamour*, and *The Earl of Tolous*. These should be distinguished from the cluster of tail-rhyme romances produced further south (mainly around the east and south-east Midlands) earlier in the fourteenth century that include *Amis and Amiloun*, *Lybeaus Desconus*, *Sir Isumbras*, and *King of Tars*.

²⁰ *Titus and Vespasian* (4x), *Richard* (3x), *Lybeaus Desconus* (2x), *Arthour and Merlin* (2x), *Bevis of Hamptoun* (2x), *Kyng Alisaunder*, *Amis and Amiloun*, *Sir Orfeo*, *Partonope*, *Sir Isumbras*.

²¹ Hanna, 'Two New (?) Lost *Piers* Manuscripts (?)', has pointed out that Lincoln's Inn 150 'almost certainly derives support from London exemplars' (p. 171). Macrae-Gibson describes the combination of Western colouring and south-eastern/London forms in the Douce 236 copy of *Of Arthour and Merlin*, although he concludes that 'a SE/London scribe working from a Western exemplar seems more likely than the other way round'; see *Of Arthour and of Merlin*, ed. by O. D. Macrae-Gibson, EETS, o.s., 279 (London: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 65.

may, it seems, have become traditional in the west (such as *Of Arthour and Merlin* and also perhaps *Richard*, which is copied several times) even though they were not originally composed there.

It is also worth mentioning *Titus and Vespasian* and the *Siege of Jerusalem* in this respect. As has been noted, these are religious narratives written with some of the stylistic attributes of romance. They also stand out amongst the corpus of Middle English romances because they were available to commercial metropolitan scribes in the fifteenth century. Very few Middle English romances can be associated with the fifteenth-century London book trade, and certainly not on a regular basis, whereas two copies of each of these texts are in books by commercial metropolitan scribes: the *Siege of Jerusalem* in London, Lambeth Palace, MS 491 and CUL, MS Mm. 5. 14; and *Titus and Vespasian* in Bodleian, MS Digby 230 and Coventry, City Record Office, MS 325/1. In addition, there are four copies in West Midlands dialects: Huntington HM 128 of the *Siege of Jerusalem*, thought to have been produced in London; BL Add. 10036 and Add. 36983, place of production unknown; and Harley 4733 containing *Titus and Vespasian*, owned by John Penynghton of Worcester. The precise details cannot be confirmed, but the repeated association of these narratives with metropolitan production, the language of the West Midlands, and both West Midlands and London owners is marked and seems suggestive of ongoing links between these regions well into the fifteenth century.

The overall impression from the extant corpus is that there were variations between the kinds of romance texts being copied in different dialects and in different parts of the country after 1400. The pragmatic realities of exemplar availability must have been a crucial factor. The patterns of copying would indicate that the most effective routes of transmission were from the south and east to the west, and from the north to the south-east, though less so in the reverse of these directions. Furthermore, the examples of romances in West Midlands manuscripts that appear to have been copied directly from London exemplars enforces the impression that exchange of exemplars between these two regions was especially significant for romance transmission.

West Midlands Romance?

One of the main problems for assessing romance in this region is the lack of extant copies of just those texts which we tend to associate with it. The discussion so far has indicated some of the pragmatic issues of exemplar circulation and availability and the likely influence of these upon the selection and copying of romance texts in

the West Midlands. Analysis of the corpus has revealed that romance texts copied and circulated in this region may well have been part of a wider pattern of textual exchange between the south-east (including London) and the West Midlands and south-west. However, as romances generally do not survive in large numbers of copies, and none in more than twelve copies (despite the signs of repeated copying that many display), it is difficult to build a coherent picture, and any conclusions must be assessed in relation to what can be established about the representativeness of the extant corpus.

A particular quandary is presented by the two texts thought to have been composed in the West Midlands that are each extant in one unique West Midlands manuscript: the alliterative *William of Palerne*, apparently composed and copied in Gloucester for Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Essex, and *Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle*, a text thought to have been composed in Shropshire in the fifteenth century and extant in a commonplace book from that region.²² These texts are 'distinctive' of the region in the sense that they are unique to it. But it is difficult to know how specialized their appeal was, or to achieve a sense of whether alliterative and Gawain romances were regularly copied in the West Midlands over an extended period in a way that could be described as constituting a local tradition. Further north, in Lancashire and Cheshire, a sequence of texts from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries adequately attests to an enduring enthusiasm for alliterative forms and stories of Gawain.²³ Whether this

²² Doyle, 'The Manuscripts', p. 90, confirms that King's College 13 is 'palaeographically and linguistically not far from the original, internally localized near Gloucester and datable not after 1361' and remarks that 'physically it resembles both earlier West Midland copies of the *South English Legendary*, with one of which it has long been bound, and the earliest separate manuscripts of *Piers Plowman*'. The origin of *Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle* is discussed by Huws, 'MS Porkington 10 and its Scribes'. The *Alliterative Alexander* (A and B) presents a similar dilemma as it is thought to have been composed in the West Midlands, in a similar dialect to *William of Palerne*, but is extant in two apparently northern manuscripts: Ashmole 44 and TCD 213. Both are in the language of Durham or south Northumberland and the TCD manuscript is bound with fragments of early sixteenth-century accounts from a Durham monastery; see Doyle, 'The Manuscripts', pp. 99–100.

²³ These include the verse in BL, Cotton MS Nero A. X (the *Gawain*-poet), the Ireland-Blackburn manuscript, the single copy of the *Destruction of Troy*, and the Percy Folio. See C. A. Luttrell, 'Three North-West Midland Manuscripts', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 42 (1958), 38–50; and Thorlac Turville-Petre, *The Alliterative Revival* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1977). Turville-Petre discusses, in particular, the 'strong evidence of the interest taken in alliterative verse in a small area of the north-west midlands during the first half of the sixteenth century' and observes how alliterative forms 'became geographically limited in the Cheshire area where alliterative verse had always been strong' (pp. 124–25).

should be extended to include areas further south, in the West Midlands, remains uncertain.²⁴

These questions remain, but what examination of the extant manuscripts does demonstrate is the range and adaptability of romance texts known to have been produced and received in this region. If there was a tradition of alliterative romance and stories of Gawain in the West Midlands, then this was contiguous with the production and reception of other kinds of romance texts. Romances were assimilated into a variety of West Midlands books and booklets according to their content, style, and purpose. The utilization of a romance depended upon its content and register but also the agenda of the scribes and the setting or occasion for which it was copied. The scribe who appended *Richard* to a copy of the *Brut* in Harley 4690 must have felt it made a suitable supplement to the chronicle; its use of epic-style couplets and historical subject matter made it a suitable companion piece. The miraculous tales of Christian adherents, *Robert of Sicily* and *King of Tars*, were included in Vernon and Simeon presumably because they were regarded as suitable exemplary models for the religious communities where they were placed.

The religious narrative *Titus and Vespasian* in Harley 4733 also seems to have been regarded as appropriate for the purpose of instruction as it was bound with a copy of Cato and owned by 'John Penyngton [...] schole master of Wurcesteur' (fol. 2^v). The sensational content of the story perhaps helped to hold his pupils' attention. That romance texts were regularly read by children and adults together is suggested by two further examples. *King Horn*, which recounts the trial by sea of the young Horn and his eventual marriage to maiden Rymenild, was regarded as suitable reading material for the trilingual Herefordshire household for whom Harley 2253 was compiled in the 1330s. Some century and a half later, *Amis and Amiloun* seems to have appealed to another young learner, Wylliam Cressett, who copied the first 850 lines of this tale of two sworn brothers into the blank pages at the end of a *Mandeville's Travels* booklet. His jottings and trial letters (on fols 70^r, 70^v, and 72^v) imply he was undergoing elementary education with other boys in a household near to Hereford. His annotations at the end of *Amis and Amiloun* express his active interest in the story, and may also have served as handwriting practice.²⁵

²⁴ These issues are considered in a different context by Derek Pearsall, 'The Alliterative Revival: Origins and Social Backgrounds', in *Middle English Alliterative Poetry*, ed. by Lawton, pp. 34–53, and Doyle, 'The Manuscripts', pp. 88–89.

²⁵ Cressett terminates his transcription of *Amis and Amiloun* with the exclamation 'Wylliam cressett was a lorde a lorde' followed by the names 'Harry John Thomas Rychart Ha Wylliam'. On fol. 69^v 'Harry', like Wylliam, signs his name and copies out a draft letter.

In addition to these examples of reading together in small groups, in households and communities, with tutors, parents, or brothers, one manuscript seems to have been more specifically designed for performance. Lincoln's Inn 150 is the only instance of a whole collection of romances thought to have been produced and received in the West Midlands and it contains texts adapted for oral presentation. Many features of the language of its five texts (*Of Arthour and Merlin*, *Kyng Alisaunder*, *Lybeaus Desconus*, the *Seege of Troye*, and *Piers Plowman A-text*) are indicative of orality and performance, and several commentators have suggested that the narrow 'holster book' format may have facilitated reading aloud.²⁶

As these examples attest, romances in West Midlands manuscripts did not have fixed or predefined roles. They existed in contexts which were both oral and literate. They could be, at one and the same time, owned by a single person and shared with a group. They were pressed into service as religious exemplars and historical narratives. They were read by both adults and children. The appearance of similar romances in both splendid illuminated manuscripts and as the jottings on flyleaves suggests that their 'status' was open to interpretation and was highly dependent upon presentation and context. Perhaps the one thing all these romances can be said to have in common (admittedly, with the exception of *Syre Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle*) is that they provide exciting stories of distant and exotic places. Here are stories of Carthage, Libya, Tarsia, Sicily, Rome, Spain, Denmark, India, Babylon, Jerusalem, Troy, the Underworld. Whether read for entertainment or instruction, to a group or alone, in a household or school or convent, these are tales of far away; they are not stories about the West Midlands.

The absence of West Midlands landscapes and locales in the extant corpus is not due to the lack of a romance featuring this area. Perhaps the most famous hero associated with the region is Guy of Warwick whose legend begins and ends in Warwick and features the castle, hermitage, and wood near to Warwick with which Guy is associated. There is no extant copy of the romance of Guy either in a West Midlands dialect or known to have circulated in the region, although the single-leaf fragment BL, MS Sloane 1044 may once have been such a copy, and there are traces of Warwickshire forms in the Auchinleck and Gonville and Caius texts.²⁷

²⁶ For discussions of Lincoln's Inn 150 as a possible performance text and the 'holster book' format, see *The Seege or Batayle of Troye*, ed. by Barnicle, p. xxxvi; *Kyng Alisaunder*, ed. by G. V. Smithers, EETS, o.s., 237 (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), vol. II: *Commentary*; *Piers Plowman: The A Version*, ed. by George Kane (London: Athlone Press, 1960), pp. 10–11.

²⁷ For a discussion of the occasional Warwickshire dialect forms in Auchinleck and Gonville and Caius 107/176, see Alison Wiggins, 'Guy of Warwick in Warwick? Reconsidering the Dialect

Two other renditions of Guy's legend, however, are known to have been commissioned in the 1440s by the Beauchamps of Warwick. Margaret, the daughter of Richard Beauchamp, commissioned Lydgate's *Guy of Warwick*, probably to honour her father; the prologue introduces the life of 'that moste worthy knyght Guy of Warrewyk of whos blode she is lynally descendid'.²⁸ Margaret's husband from 1425, John Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury and claimant to the earldom of Warwick through his wife, commissioned the French prose account *Le Rommant de Guy de Warwik et de Herolt d'Ardenne* in the Shrewsbury Book (BL, MS Royal 15. E. VI) as a wedding gift for the young Margaret of Anjou on her marriage to Henry VI in 1445.²⁹ These commissions were designed to glorify the Warwick house and were intended for royal and aristocratic audiences. They are specifically aristocratic appropriations of the story, in which the region is of interest in relation to the promotion of its leading family at a national and international level. The pan-European scope of Guy's legend and his role as the champion of kings and emperors means he is well suited to this national role.

The Beauchamps' fame and their efforts over successive generations to develop a 'cult of Guy' at Warwick — realized in art, architecture, and literature — is likely to have had an impact upon the wider reception of the romance. Indeed, the deliberate enhancement of local and regional references in the latest manuscript copy of the romance indicates that Guy's perceived Warwickshire associations

Evidence', *English Studies*, 84 (2003), 219–30. Sloane 1044 contains a single-folio fragment of *Guy of Warwick* from the fourteenth century. As it is only 216 lines long it is not possible to achieve a detailed linguistic profile, however, the form *heo* ('she') appears repeatedly, which by the mid- to late fourteenth century was primarily a south-western and West Midlands form. This, combined with the forms *hem* ('them'), *much* ('much'), *segge* ('say'), and the use of both *-en* and *-ep* for the third person plural, may indicate that the language was West Midlands.

²⁸ *The Minor Poems of John Lydgate*, ed. by H. N. MacCracken, EETS, o.s., 192 (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), pp. 516–38. The verses are discussed by Velma Bourgeois Richmond, *The Legend of Guy of Warwick* (New York: Garland, 1996), pp. 123–27.

²⁹ For descriptions of the Shrewsbury Book and *Le Rommant*, see G. P. Gilson, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1921), II, 177–79 and IV, plate 96; *Le Rommant de Guy de Warwik et de Herolt d'Ardenne*, ed. by D. J. Conlon, University of North Carolina Studies in the Romance Language and Literatures, 102 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1971). The book's significance as a wedding gift is discussed by Catherine Reynolds, 'The Shrewsbury Book, British Library, Royal MS 15. E. VI', in *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Rouen*, ed. by Jenny Stratford, British Library Archaeological Association Conference Transactions for the Year 1986, 12 (Leeds: Maney, 1993), pp. 109–16.

remained well defined at the end of the fifteenth century.³⁰ It may be that an interest in promoting and patronizing ‘regionality’ was a particularly aristocratic preoccupation. A strong sense of locale, expressed through language or descriptions of landscape, is certainly shared by the alliterative romances of the West Midlands and north-west with known or assumed aristocratic patrons: *William of Palerne*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, and the Ireland-Blackburn manuscript’s *Awntyrs off Arthur at the Terne Wathelyne* and *Awovyng of Arthur*. It is an interest that seems to be in marked contrast to the way romance texts functioned for other West Midlands scribes and readers.

Conclusions

By focusing on the production and reception of romance (rather than on composition), and by considering owners and scribes, it has been possible to gain a much more varied view of Middle English romance in the literate and literary culture of the late medieval West Midlands. Analysis of the extant corpus indicates that repeatedly, at different stages, and in different ways, the copying and circulation of romance texts in this region was influenced and invigorated by contact with London and the south-east. Romances in West Midlands manuscripts were generally derived either from the west itself, or from the south-east, London, and east Midlands. By contrast, the cluster of tail-rhymed romances composed in the north and north Midlands in the late fourteenth century does not seem to have been available to copyists in the West Midlands or south-west. Analysis of individual West Midlands manuscripts demonstrates diversity in both the type and utility of romance, as they were assimilated according to the needs and interests of inventive scribes and imaginative readers. The extant manuscripts attest to a

³⁰ The fifteenth-century redaction of the romance in CUL Ff. 2. 38, edited by Julius Zupitza, *The Romance of Guy of Warwick*, EETS, e.s., 25–26 (London: J. Trübner, 1875–76), has a number of unique passages. These include an account of the ceremony at which Guy is knighted in Warwick, featuring details of his sword and spurs and a description of the armour personally maintained by Felice and worn by Guy during his battle against Colbrond as ‘England’s champion’. Guy’s sword and armour are still on display at Warwick castle today; see *Manual*, ed. by Severs, p. 31. The Beauchamps’ concern to display and circulate tangible evidence of their legendary ancestor is discussed by J. Frankis, ‘Taste and Patronage in Late Medieval England as Reflected in Versions of *Guy of Warwick*’, *Medium Ævum*, 66 (1997), 80–93 (pp. 84–87); and Carol Fewster, *Traditionality and Genre in Middle English Romance* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1987), p. 114.

range of functions, from illuminated treasures, moral exempla, and historical narratives, to haphazard jottings and schoolboy entertainments. There is, however, scant evidence available from this region to confirm that alliterative romance or stories of local heroes were reproduced with any regularity by gentry readers or those of the middling sort. The extent to which these kinds of romances are under-represented by the extant corpus is difficult to estimate. The question remains as to whether the enthusiasm for alliterative forms and for stories of Gawain that distinguishes Lancashire and Cheshire should be extended further south in scope to include the West Midlands. It may be that alliterative romance tended to be associated with aristocratic audiences, or performance, or both, and it is this which explains its absence from West Midlands miscellanies, commonplace books, and instructive handbooks. Aristocratic patrons of romance, including the Beauchamps of Warwick and Humphrey de Bohun, certainly seem to have been preoccupied with romance that had a regional flavour or dimension. An interest in the idea of 'regional romance' may, it seems, have been as likely to be determined by social status as geographical proximity.

FINGERPRINTING PAPER IN WEST MIDLANDS MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS

Orietta Da Rold

The important study published by Lyall in 1989 entitled 'Materials: The Paper Revolution' is still the essential reference for any scholar working on medieval paper used in the British Isles.¹ Indeed, this article raises several issues in the study of paper within medieval book production and paves the way for a new awareness of the codicological and textual evidence provided by this material. However, after Lyall's compelling arguments, the study of medieval paper and its use in Britain seems to have come to a halt, and the issues that this publication raises still remain to be studied. This essay will provide an initial response to this hiatus, presenting a new research project on 'fingerprinting' medieval paper manuscripts geographically localized to the West Midlands. This essay will focus on the aims, context, and purpose of this project.

There has been almost no analysis of British medieval paper manuscript production. Those studies which have appeared both pre- and post-1989 call for more research in the field, raising a number of important questions which have still to be fully addressed: Who used paper and why? Was paper really as unpopular in the medieval period as has been claimed? Where was it initially used? And how did medieval compilers/authors/book producers use it?² Data concerning the

¹ R. J. Lyall, 'Materials: The Paper Revolution', in *Book Production and Publishing in Britain 1375–1475*, ed. by Jeremy Griffiths and Derek Pearsall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 11–29.

² Interest in paper as a writing material in Britain started during the eighteenth century, albeit focused on the identification of watermarks; see *Original Letters Written During the Reign of Henry VI, Edward IV and Richard III*, ed. by John Fenn, 5 vols (London: J. & J. Robinson, 1787); Samuel Denne, 'Observations on Paper Marks', *Archaeologia*, 12 (1796), 114–31; Samuel Leight

early use of paper in British medieval manuscript documents and books is not easy to come by. This creates difficulties in investigating and analysing the function of paper in manuscript book production, in assessing the evidence in studies of individual codices, and in dating material. Catalogues of manuscripts usually record the type of writing material of the codices, and there has already been some degree of research using these resources,³ although description of watermarks is not always included.⁴ In recent catalogues of dated and datable manuscripts and

Sotheby, *Principia Typographica*, 3 vols (London: Walter McDowall, 1858); Aitken Henderson, 'A Preliminary Note on 15th Century Watermarks', *Transactions of the Glasgow Archaeological Society*, 1 (1890), 89–110; William Blades, 'On Paper and Paper-Marks', *The Library*, 1 (1889), 217–23; R. Lemon, 'A Collection of Water Marks by the Late Mr R. Lemon of the Record Office', in H. T. Scott and S. Dovey, *Guide to the Collector of Historical Documents* (London, 1891), Appendix; and E. Heawood, 'Sources of Early English Paper-Supply', *The Library*, 4th series, 10 (1929–30), 282–307. For an overview of this earlier research, see E. J. Labarre, 'The Study of Watermarks in Great Britain', in *The Briquet Album, a Miscellany on Watermarks, Supplementing Dr Briquet's Les Filigranes by Various Paper Scholars*, ed. by E. J. Labarre (Hilversum: Paper Publications Society, 1952), pp. 97–118 (p. 97), and Peter Bower, 'The White Art: The Importance of Interpretation in the Analysis of Paper', in *Looking at Paper: Evidence & Interpretation: Symposium Proceedings, Toronto 1999*, ed. by J. Slavin and others (Ottawa: Canadian Conservation Institute, 2001), pp. 5–16, in particular pp. 8–11. Only with the seminal article by Ivy did use of paper in book production start to be considered; see G. S. Ivy, 'The Bibliography of the Manuscript-Book', in *The English Library before 1700: Studies in its History*, ed. by Francis Wormald and C. E. Wright ([London]: Athlone Press, 1958), pp. 32–65; subsequently, case studies of codices and documents written on paper have appeared highlighting the need for more research in the use of this material as a writing surface; see C. Paul Christianson, *Memorials of the Book Trade in Medieval London: The Archives of Old London Bridge, A Study of the Records of the Bridge House Estates* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1987); John J. Thompson, *Robert Thornton and the London Thornton Manuscript* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1987); B. C. Barker-Benfield, 'Appendix: Technical Notes and Collation-Chart', in *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer and the King's Quair*, ed. by Julia Boffey and A. S. G. Edwards (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), pp. 29–60; *Introduction to Archival Materials: An Introduction to Watermarks* (Kew: Public Record Office, 1997); and Brian Luker, 'British Watermarks: The Watermarks of the Wells Act Books 1378 to 1819', *The Quarterly*, 36 (2000), 1–9.

³ Lyall was able to discuss the growth in the use of paper in manuscript production by collating the paper manuscripts from the four volumes of N. R. Ker's *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969): see Lyall, 'Materials: The Paper Revolution'; and Kwakkel considered the same issues on a broader European scale using the dated and datable catalogue volumes; see Erik Kwakkel, 'A New Type of Book for a New Type of Reader: The Emergence of Paper in Vernacular Book Production', *The Library*, 7th series, 4 (2003), 219–48.

⁴ Ker, *Medieval Manuscripts*, p. vii, noted: 'I have not described watermarks in paper, through inability to do so usefully. In the near future, probably, all medieval manuscripts on paper will be examined by experts, using exact technique for localization and dating.'

literary texts, however, there is an increasing tendency to provide bibliographical details of paper.⁵ Nevertheless a catalogue of medieval paper in documents and manuscripts is not yet available. Nor is there a chronology of watermarks. As Doyle suggests there is a need for 'fully-documented comparable instances and variants [of watermarks] in use in Britain'⁶ and in a recent article Hanna emphasizes the need for 'a paper data bank for the British Isles'.⁷

Scholars working on continental medieval manuscripts have shown the importance of the evidence that the writing material can provide,⁸ and in the past two decades research on paper has flourished. Studies have appeared which have shed new light on the use of paper in medieval book production. In particular, the collective effort by Ornato and others to quantify codicologically the surviving corpus of medieval manuscripts in European libraries has produced remarkable results. This rigorous method, which has been defined as *codicologie quantitative*, is based on a systematic collection and analysis of evidence leading to a better understanding of the making of medieval codices in general, and of national production methods and techniques in particular.⁹

⁵ See, for instance, Pamela Robinson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c.888–1600 in London Libraries*, 2 vols (London: British Library, 2003); Daniel Mosser, 'Description of the Witnesses', in *The Wife of Bath's Prologue on CD-ROM*, ed. by P. Robinson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), and 'Description of the Witnesses', in *The General Prologue on CD-ROM*, ed. by Elizabeth Solopova (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

⁶ A. I. Doyle, 'Paper as Evidence in Medieval Manuscripts', paper presented to AMARC, July 1998.

⁷ Ralph Hanna, 'Middle English Books and Middle English Literary History', *Modern Philology*, 102 (2004), 157–78 (p. 170).

⁸ See for example A. I. Doyle, 'Recent Directions in Medieval Manuscript Study', in *New Directions in Later Medieval Manuscript Studies: Essays from the 1998 Harvard Conference*, ed. by Derek Pearsall (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer in association with York Medieval Press and University of York Centre for Medieval Studies, 2000), pp. 1–14; *Ancient and Medieval Book Materials and Techniques: Erice, 18–25 September 1992*, ed. by Marilena Maniaci and Paola F. Munafò (Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1993). For a comprehensive bibliography, see Marilena Maniaci, Carlo Federici, and Ezio Ornato, *Archeologia del Manoscritto: Metodi, Problemi, Bibliografia Recente* (Rome: Viella, 2002).

⁹ Carla Bozzolo and Ezio Ornato, *Pour une histoire du livre manuscrit au moyen âge: trois essais de codicologie quantitative*, 2 vols (Paris: CNRS, 1980–83); the following essays in *La face cachée du livre médiéval: l'histoire du livre vue par Ezio Ornato, ses amis et ses collègues*, ed. by Ezio Ornato and Carla Bozzolo (Rome: Viella, 1997): Carla Bozzolo and Ezio Ornato, 'L'étude quantitative du manuscrit médiéval: aspects méthodologiques et perspectives de recherche', pp. 33–39, Ezio Ornato, 'La codicologie quantitative, outil privilégié de l'histoire du livre médiéval', pp. 41–65,

The methodology adopted by bibliographers of printed books is also relevant. Since McKerrrow's appeal for 'more exact knowledge of the different sizes, prices, and "makes" of paper of the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries',¹⁰ research on paper has rapidly advanced and is developing into a discipline in its own right.¹¹ It is now accepted that watermarked paper, in particular, can help to determine temporal *termini* to date otherwise undated material; the irregular make-up of a watermark sequence may reveal hidden textual problems; a disrupted collation may be reconstructed and the structure of the quire can be studied to better understand scribal activities and methods.¹²

and Ezio Ornato, 'Pour une codicologie "expérimentale"', pp. 3–31; Carla Bozzolo and Ezio Ornato, 'Les inventaires médiévaux et leur exploitation quantitative', in *Libri, Lettori e Biblioteche dell'Italia Medievale (Secoli IX–XV): Fonti, Testi, Utilizzazione del Libro*, ed. by Giuseppe Lombardi and Donatella Nebbiai Dalla Guarda (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2000), pp. 165–77.

¹⁰ Ronald McKerrrow, *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1927), p. 97.

¹¹ See for instance the work on paper by Allan Stevenson, *Briquet's Opuscula: The Complete Works of Dr. C. M. Briquet without Les Filigranes* (Hilversum: Paper Publications Society, 1955); Allan Stevenson, 'Paper as Bibliographical Evidence', *The Library*, 5th series, 17 (1962), 197–212; and the responses by Tanselle and Needham: G. T. Tanselle, 'The Bibliographical Description of Paper', *Studies in Bibliography*, 24 (1971), 29–67; P. Needham, 'Allan H. Stevenson and the Bibliographical Use of Paper', *Studies in Bibliography*, 47 (1994), 24–64. See also more specifically on paper manuscripts: Monique Bar-Yehouda-Zerdoun and Georges Korobelnik, *Les papiers filigranés médiévaux: essai de méthodologie descriptive, bibliologia*, vols VII–VIII (Turnhout: Brepols, 1989); R. L. Hills, 'The Importance of Laid and Chain Line Spacing', in *Le papier au moyen âge: histoire et techniques*, ed. by Monique Bar-Yehouda (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), pp. 149–63. On the study of the thickness of the paper, see for example Ezio Ornato and others, 'Dove Va La Polpa? Irregolarità Sistematiche del "Profilo Planare" dei Fogli nella Carta Medievale', *Quinio*, 2 (2000), 103–44. On the analysis of degree of white, see Ornato, *La Carta Occidentale nel Tardo Medioevo*, 2 vols (Rome: Istituto centrale per la patologia del libro, 2001), in particular vol. II.

¹² On dating, see for example Jean Irigoien, 'La datation par les filigranes du papier', in *Codicologica: les matériaux du livre manuscrit*, ed. by J. P. Gumbert and A. Gruys (Leyden: E. J. Brill, 1980), v, 9–36, and K. van den Horst, 'The Reliability of Watermarks', *Gazette du livre médiéval*, 15 (1989), 15–19. On paper analysis, see note 5 above and Theo Gerardy, 'Die Beschreibung des in Manuskripten und Drucken Vorkommenden Papiers', in *Codicologica*, ed. by Gumbert and Gruys, v, 37–51; Stephen Spector, 'Symmetry in Watermark Sequences', *Studies in Bibliography*, 31 (1978), 162–78; *Essays in Paper Analysis*, ed. by Stephen Spector (London: Associated University Presses, 1986); and Orietta Da Rold, 'The Quiring System in Cambridge University Library Ms Dd.4.24 of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales', *The Library*, 7th series, 4 (2003), 107–28.

Moreover, paper as evidence, artefact, and commodity has interested scholars across different disciplines, and beyond the medieval period.¹³ A symposium was held in 1999 in Toronto and an international conference was organized in Virginia in 2000.¹⁴ Research on watermarks is still being published in print,¹⁵ and from 1998 several electronic watermark archives have also appeared. These are searchable databases, which include electronic reproductions and description of watermarks.¹⁶

This new research on paper has inspired my recent work on medieval paper manuscripts in British libraries and archives. The wealth of evidence which can be found after a preliminary search both in London and in local archives is

¹³ See for example the proceedings of the IPH, *Paper History as an Auxiliary Science: 23rd Congress of the International Association of Paper Historians, Leipzig*, ed. by Frieder Schmidt (Utrecht: Teygeler, 1996), p. 11; the publications of other paper historians: Dard Hunter, *Paper-making: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft* (London: Dover, 1978); R. L. Hills, *Papermaking in Britain 1488–1988: A Short History* (London: Athlone Press, 1988); and John Bidwell, 'Study of Paper as Evidence, Artefact, and Commodity', in *The Book Encompassed: Studies in Twentieth Century Bibliography*, ed. by Peter Davison (Cambridge: University Press, 1997), pp. 69–82. On paper trade and production, see *Contributi Italiani alla Diffusione della Carta in Occidente tra XIV e XV Secolo: Convegno di Studio, 22 Luglio 1988*, ed. by Giancarlo Castagnari (Fabriano: Pia Università dei Cartai, 1990); *Produzione e Commercio della Carta e del Libro Secc. XIII–XVIII*, ed. by Simonetta Cavaciocchi (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1992).

¹⁴ *Looking at Paper*, ed. by Slavin and others; and *Puzzles in Paper: Concepts in Historical Watermarks. Essays from the International Conference on the History, Function and Study of Watermarks, Roanoke, Virginia*, ed. by Daniel Wayne Mosser, W. Sullivan Ernest, and Michael Saffle (London: British Library, 2000).

¹⁵ See for example the recent publications by William E. Coleman, *Watermarks in the Manuscripts of Boccaccio's Il Teseida: A Catalogue, Codicological Study and Album* (Firenze: L. S. Olschki, 1997); and Martin Wittek, *Inventaire des plus anciens manuscrits de papier conservé à la Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er et de leur filigranes (XIII^e–XIV^e siècles)* (Brussels: Bibliothèque Royale Albert 1er, 2001).

¹⁶ See the Gravell Watermark Database, <<http://www.gravell.org/>>; the electronic version of G. Piccard, *Die Wasserzeichenkartei Piccard im Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart*, 17 vols (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1961–97), at <<http://pan.bsz-bw.de/piccard/einfueh.php>>; the watermark database of the incunabula printed in the Low Countries in Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique, <<http://watermark.kb.nl/>>; and the Austrian Project WZMA (Wasserzeichen des Mittelalters) (v. 2.2 - 2005-02-20) by Alois Haidinger and Maria Stieglecker, with the collaboration of Franz Lackner, <<http://www.oeaw.ac.at/ksbm/wz/wzma2.htm>> (all the Web sites mentioned in this essay were last visited on 30 July 2005). For a review of the structure of some of these databases, see Brigitte de la Passardière and Claire Bustarret, 'Profil: An Iconographic Database for Modern Watermarked Paper', *Computers and the Humanities*, 36 (2002), 143–69.

overwhelming.¹⁷ In order to study medieval paper manuscripts in British libraries, we need to collect information in the form of a searchable database, with a detailed description of the paper as a physical object and contextual information relating to the production of the manuscript. Such a resource would offer an innovative approach to the study of paper manuscripts by reconsidering bibliographical features of paper codices and would help us to construct a chronology of English paper. It would provide information to date as yet undated material, to investigate the function of paper in manuscript book production, and to assess codicological evidence in studies of literary works. It would enable us to study the chronology and the growth in the utilization of paper in British medieval manuscript production.¹⁸

The first stage must be to address several methodological issues. In particular, it is necessary to develop principles to guide the selection of the material and templates for the description of the paper and the manuscripts, and a policy on the reproduction of watermarks or images of the material has to be decided. In order to address these issues of defining a methodological approach and a scheme of work for a paper project on medieval manuscript production in the British Isles, I propose to create a prototype database. For this project I propose to build on the work of the Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project 'An Electronic Catalogue of Vernacular Manuscript Books of the Medieval West Midlands'. The aim of the *MWM* project is to catalogue over 150 manuscripts which are associated on linguistic grounds with the West Midlands counties of

¹⁷ I have begun a systematic investigation collecting data on the early use of paper in Britain to try to uncover how much paper was used in archival and book production during the medieval period. The quantities are surprisingly high in the Public Record Office, where numerous paper documents are to be found starting from the reign of Richard II (see for example categories C81/1349-1350-1354; C266/20; C25/20; E28/1-2-4-5-7). Moreover the records of the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral include items written on paper. An example is MS 25161/3-10: paper account rolls of the chantry of Roger de Waltham (canon of St Paul's, c. 1309-32), 1370-1418. The amount of paper is such that Stephen Freeth, Keeper of Manuscripts at London, Guildhall Library, has kindly informed me that they usually catalogue parchment or vellum, thus when the type of material is not given one should assume it is paper (private communication). At Durham University Library, Archives & Special Collections, Alan Piper and Ian Doyle kindly showed me the potential of the paper documents stored in the archives.

¹⁸ When presented at conferences (for example, 'Medieval Paper Manuscripts: Thrills and Spills', Research Seminar Series, The Material Book, The University of Reading, 21 October 2003; and 'The Early Use of Paper in Literary Manuscripts', Early Book Society, University of Durham, 10-14 July 2003), the project has received an enthusiastic response from the scholarly community concerning its potential both to reorientate current thinking about late medieval manuscripts and to provide a valuable research tool for other scholars working with paper evidence.

Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire, and dated from *c.* 1300–*c.* 1475. The detailed examination of the manuscripts, the electronic enhancement of the manuscript descriptions, and the advanced state of the catalogue entries provide an ideal foundation for a database that will concentrate on the analysis of the material of the manuscripts.¹⁹

The West Midlands catalogue includes entries for thirty manuscripts that contain paper:

Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 1117 (O. 2. 13)
 London, British Library, MS Additional 4698
 London, British Library, MS Additional 12056
 London, British Library, MS Additional 36791
 London, British Library, MS Additional 36983
 London, British Library, MS Additional 59678
 London, British Library, MS Arundel 272
 London, British Library, MS Harley 3810
 London, British Library, MS Harley 4733
 London, British Library, MS Sloane 5
 London, British Library, MS Sloane 1009
 London, British Library, MS Sloane 2027
 London, British Library, MS Sloane 3160
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ashmole 1438
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 123
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 78
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 103
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 304
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS eMusaeo 88
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Greaves 57
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 96
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. B. 166
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. C. 81

¹⁹ For an outline of the project, see 'An Electronic Catalogue of Vernacular Manuscript Books of the Medieval West Midlands', <<http://www.english.bham.ac.uk/medievalstudies/MWMcat/>>, and now *Manuscripts of the West Midlands: A Catalogue of Vernacular Manuscript Books of the English West Midlands, c. 1300 – c. 1475* (Birmingham: University of Birmingham, 2006), <<http://www.mwm.bham.ac.uk>> (*MWM*). I should like to thank my colleagues on the project, the Project Director, Professor Wendy Scase, and Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Dr Rebecca Farnham, for supporting my paper prototype and for providing access to data prior to publication.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. D. 100
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawl. poet. 32
 Oxford, Lincoln College, MS Lat. 129
 Oxford, Wadham College, MS 13
 Southwell, Minster Chapter Library, MS 7
 Staffordshire, County Record Office, WSL/D1721/3/186
 Worcester, Cathedral Library, MS F. 10

It is envisaged that the major outcome of the Paper Manuscripts of the West Midlands Project will be a supplementary electronic catalogue of the paper contained in these manuscripts.²⁰ This group of thirty manuscripts contains medical and scientific texts, miscellaneous collections, religious and moral treatises, romances, and other vernacular literature (Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, *Sir Orfeo*, etc). In date they range from the beginning of the fourteenth century to the end of the fifteenth century.

Medieval paper is a manufactured product, and, as Bower explains, 'Every sheet of paper tells a story: it contains the marks of its making and, as such, is worthy of close examination'.²¹ It is produced with a mould and a vat full of pulp, which would be used to create sheets of paper by a 'vat man'. It is known that the vat man alternates two moulds; moreover within a paper mill there could be more than one vat, thus scholars are still debating whether the production of paper from one mill is the outcome of a single pair of moulds at one time. Each mould leaves an indelible fingerprint on the sheet with very specific morphological features. A mould is made with wires sustained by a wooden deckle; thinly spaced laid lines are placed horizontally, and regularly spaced chain lines are positioned vertically. A watermark can appear on chain lines, between chain lines or on a supplementary chain line called *tranche de fil*. The watermark itself can be placed at different distances from the four sides of the deckle and it could be positioned on the left or on the right of the mould.²² The distance between chain lines, the

²⁰ This small paper project, titled 'A Bibliographical Analysis of some Medieval Paper Manuscripts of the West Midlands', received a major grant by the Bibliographical Society in March 2005 and the analysis of the material is now underway.

²¹ Bower, 'The White Art', p. 5.

²² Several publications have appeared on paper making. See the seminal Hunter, *Papermaking*, and for a case study on production in Fabriano, see F. Pirani, *I Maestri Cartari*, ed. by G. Pinto (Firenze: Libreria Chiari, 2000). On the use of twin moulds in a paper mill, see Allan Stevenson, 'Watermarks Are Twins', *Studies in Bibliography*, 4 (1951–52), 57–91. On the possibility of more than one vat man working in paper mills and the evidence for similar watermarks used in different mills, see the 'Discussion', pp. 161–63, in Hills, 'Importance of Laid and Chain Line Spacing'; see also some recent work on the Fabriano merchants' records by Giovanna Derenzini, 'La

thickness of the laid lines, and the size of the sheets vary. The consistency of the pulp and the chemical used to make the water-logged pulp would influence the thickness of the paper and its consistency and colour.²³ The size of the paper and its colour and thickness constitute some of the features of the transaction which merchants registered in their accounts.²⁴

A large amount of literature has already been published on how to describe paper.²⁵ In 1997 the IPH published the 'International standard for the registration of papers with or without watermarks'. As the guidelines explain: 'This standard includes all relevant criteria for describing a sheet of paper with or without watermarks, in spite of its origin or age. Not all data have to be registered; the MUST fields are marked by the sign *'.²⁶ The standard is intended to provide a code of practice, to suggest a standard way of describing paper and identifying watermarks, in order to enable scholars to exchange information and share data. These recommendations are important, but at times impractical. It is difficult to record the colour of paper without a spectrophotometer, especially if the paper of the medieval manuscript is very dirty due to being partially disbound or to specific forms of use. Moreover, a critique by Robert Allison, which was published in 1992, highlights how the standard is unworkable especially when applied to the design of electronic databases. For instance, it does not provide sufficient emphasis on the distinction between raw data and data analysis and the standard does not allow for individual notes or for a change in the 'record history'.²⁷ The scholarly community certainly needs a standard which can be followed to prepare

Produzione della Carta a Fabriano agli Inizi del "400", in *Contributi Italiani alla Diffusione della Carta*, ed. by Castagnari, pp. 137–46.

²³ Specifically on how the production technique could improve over the century, see R. L. Hills, 'A Technical Revolution in Papermaking, 1250–1350', in *Looking at Paper*, ed. by Slavin and others, pp. 105–11.

²⁴ Records of the paper trade show that each transaction from the paper mills to the merchant was registered and the details which were recorded include date, description of the paper (quality, type of watermark), quantity, format (size of the sheet), and price per ream. See Derenzini, 'La Produzione della Carta a Fabriano agli Inizi del "400"', and compare the data published by Zonghi; see *Zonghi's Watermarks*, ed. by A. F. Gasparinetti (Hilversum: Paper Publications Society, 1953).

²⁵ See in particular notes 11 and 12 above.

²⁶ Published at <<http://www.paperhistory.org/standard.htm>>.

²⁷ See for more details *Commentary and Interpretation of the IPH Standard*, in *The Watermark Initiative*, ed. by R. W. Allison, <<http://abacus.bates.edu/Faculty/wmarchive/wm-initiative/iph-commentary.html>>.

uniform records, but those standards should be flexible enough to allow researchers to implement different research strategies suitable for the chosen aims and objectives of the project. A team of scholars who worked on Italian medieval paper manuscripts and incunabula implemented this flexibility. *La Carta Occidentale nel Tardo Medioevo* by Ornato, Busonero, Munafò, and Storace appeared in 2001. Using as a background their research in quantitative codicology, the team has published important findings concerning the morphological characteristics of paper, its typology and use.²⁸

The methodology adopted by the Italian project is explained in the first volume of the publication and it can be summarized as follows:

1. Checking the collation.
2. Systematic analysis of the bifolia, with the aim of collating all the sheets produced by the same mould and providing a complete map of the paper stock used to prepare the volume. This analysis includes:
 - a. Recognition of the mould side of the sheet, the side which touches the wires (as opposed to the felt side, that is the side which touches the felt used in between sheets to dry the paper).
 - b. Once the mould side has been identified it is possible to reconstruct the position of the watermark on the mould. A simple rule of thumb allows immediate recognition:
 - i. Watermark upright on the verso of the folio = mark on the right.
 - ii. Watermark upright on the recto of the folio = mark on the left.
 - iii. Watermark upside down on the verso of the folio = mark on the left.
 - iv. Watermark upside down on the recto of the folio = mark on the right.
 - c. Examination of the watermark to recognize identical marks and distinguish them from the others. This observation is mainly based on the size of the watermark (height and width) and its distance from the nearest chain lines.
 - d. Completing the record cards. This process is quite detailed, but it can be rendered in the following schema:
 - i. General information on the manuscript, including hand, number of written columns, and number of lines per folio; trimming (top, bottom, or side); condition of the material; any available information on the conservation of the volume. Indication of the number of reproductions made and the number of folios which come from different moulds.

²⁸ Ezio Ornato, P. Busonero, P. F. Munafò, and M. S. Storace, *La Carta Occidentale nel Tardo Medioevo*, 2 vols (Rome: Istituto Centrale per la Patologia del Libro, 2001).

- ii. Working template on the analysis of the watermarks in tabular form: it includes the type of watermark, principal variants, orientation of the mark in relation to the folding of the folio, direction of the mark (whether upright or upside down), position of the watermark on the folio, minor variants, dimensions, and distance from chain lines.
- iii. Description of the mould: includes general information on the manuscript and the folios to be analysed. The orientation and position of the watermark on the left or right side of the mould is recorded; its maximum height and maximum width in millimetres; its distance from the chain line nearer to the gutter and the distance from the chain line nearer to the external margin; distance from the gutter and from the external border; and distance from the top and bottom border and from nearby chain lines. The number and type of sewing dots is recorded, including the distance of all the chain lines around the watermarks. The distance between the laid lines is measured and noted using a special magnifying glass calibrated in decimillimetres. The same method is applied to the folio without watermarks.
- iv. Final examination includes the analysis of the degree of whiteness of the paper and the thickness of the sheet. Using a macrometer, the thickness of the folio is noted with measurements taken from the centre of the three margins on both conjugates.

This methodology leads to a very comprehensive analysis of the material, but it also requires a high degree of instrumentation and a group of scholars who work as a team in order to carry out the analysis of the evidence.²⁹

The morphological examination of a sheet of paper is essential in order to establish the type of stock used. However, additional layers of information have to be added in order to address questions such as who used paper and how it was employed within the production market, whether it was available in great quantities, and whether the working pattern of a scribe can be determined by studying the distribution of texts, paper stocks, and hands. Moreover, the method used by the Italian project must be adapted to allow for both differences in the corpus of material studied and different objectives of study, although it must ideally still conform broadly with the IPH standards.

²⁹ At an early stage, the team of *il progetto carta* decided to exclude from their corpus all those books whose format was not folio. This decision was made in order to enable researchers to carry out a better analysis of the paper stock used in the chosen manuscripts and incunabula. Ornato and others, *La Carta Occidentale nel Tardo Medioevo*, 1, in particular pp. 27–84.

Fingerprinting the paper of the West Midlands manuscripts implies providing exact reproductions of the sheet produced by the mould. A visual representation would only be possible if one could acquire images of every unit that made up the sheet of paper before it was folded. Alternatively, it is possible to record features by entering numerical measurements into a database whose fields are sufficiently precise as to provide adequate information to enable an analysis of the paper stock. The essential part of this kind of record is the measurement of the distance between chain lines and the laid lines. David Vander Meulen argues that measuring the chain line of an unwatermarked folio will provide sufficient data to proceed to an identification of moulds even though the sheet does not contain watermarks. His argument is based on the assumption that each mould is hand made and therefore production is not completely standardized. He offered a compelling argument that he tested on eighteenth-century paper. This investigation can be done with a ruler, and any details or abnormality of the chain lines should be recorded for comparison. Such a process will provide the pattern and hence typologies of paper stocks.³⁰ Watermarks, therefore, are not as central a part of paper analysis as they have been considered in the past. It is essential that they are recorded, but their study should preferably be incorporated into the analysis of the sheet. If the overall features of a mould were the imprint to be considered and a record made of any available features rather than a selection of a few, this would allow a more flexible approach to paper analysis.

This method is appropriate to the analysis of paper in multiple formats, as is the case with the corpus of thirty West Midlands manuscripts chosen for the prototype. In the corpus of the West Midlands paper manuscripts various formats are represented from folios to quartos to octavos.³¹

A 'low-tech' analysis of paper may lead to interesting results if it re-evaluates the analysis of the structure of the book and the interplay between scribes, texts, and material. A new analysis of the collation is prepared with the view of determining the format of the folding of the sheet of paper. Once the collation is run, details on the layout and general production technique can be recorded, and subsequently

³⁰ D. L. Vander Meulen, 'The Identification of Paper without Watermarks: The Example of Pope's *Dunciad*', *Studies in Bibliography*, 37 (1984), 58–82; for a similar argument on medieval paper, see Hills, 'Importance of Laid and Chain Line Spacing'.

³¹ Six of the twelve British Library copies, for example, contain paper folded into quarto (Add. 4698, Add. 12056, Arundel 272, Harley 4733, Sloane 5, Sloane 3160), four into folios (Add. 36791, Add. 36983, Add. 59678, Sloane 2027), one into octavo (Harley 3810). (Sloane 1009 was temporarily unavailable for examination.)

a diagrammatical representation of each quire can be prepared. The diagrams provide information on the distribution and direction of the type of watermark with its mould side. They also map the hands of the scribe in each quire.

The following example represents a collation of BL Add. 59678 (Malory’s *Morte d’Arthur*). The manuscript is a folio format and is made up of sixty quires:

Legend

Watermark orientation depending on the mould side:

W Mould side with the mark upside down

M Mould side with the mark upright

F Felt side of the paper

Watermark types:

* Arms of France with pendant

\$ Gothic letter P

Scribes:

scribe 1

scribe 2

Layout technique:

P Pricking

R Ruling

Quire 1		Quire 2		Quire 3 P		Quire 4 P	
9 ^r	16 ^v *M	17 ^r *M	24 ^v	25 ^r	missing	missing	40 ^v
9 ^v	16 ^r *F	17 ^v *	24 ^r	25 ^v	missing	missing	40 ^r
10 ^r *M	15 ^v	18 ^r *M	23 ^v	26 ^r *M	31 ^v	34 ^r	39 ^v *W
10 ^v *F	15 ^r	18 ^v *	23 ^r	26 ^v *	31 ^r	34 ^v	39 ^r *
11 ^r *F	14 ^v	19 ^r *	22 ^v	27 ^r *W	30 ^v	35 ^r	38 ^v *M
11 ^v *W	14 ^r	19 ^v *W	22 ^r	27 ^v *	30 ^r	35 ^v	38 ^r *
12 ^r	13 ^v *W	20 ^r	21 ^v *	28 ^r	29 ^v *M	36 ^r *W	37 ^v
12 ^v	13 ^r *F	20 ^v	21 ^r *W	28 ^v	29 ^r *	36 ^v *	37 ^r

Quire 5 P		Quire 6 R+P		Quire 7 R+P		Quire 8 R+P	
41 ^r *W		45 ^r \$M	52 ^v	53 ^r	60 ^v	61 ^r	68 ^v
41 ^v *		45 ^v \$	52 ^r	53 ^v \$W	60 ^r	61 ^v	68 ^r \$M
42 ^r *W		46 ^r \$M	51 ^v	54 ^r	59 ^v \$M	62 ^r \$W	67 ^v
42 ^v *		46 ^v \$	51 ^r	54 ^v	59 ^r	62 ^v	67 ^r
43 ^r	44 ^v *W	47 ^r	50 ^v \$	55 ^r \$M	58 ^v	63 ^r \$M	66 ^v
43 ^v	44 ^r *	47 ^v	50 ^r \$W	55 ^v	58 ^r	63 ^v	66 ^r
		48 ^r	49 ^v \$M	56 ^r	57 ^v \$M	64 ^r	65 ^v \$W
		48 ^v	49 ^r \$	56 ^v	57 ^r	64 ^v	65 ^r

If the format is different, such as in quarto, a note is also inserted on the position of the watermark in respect to the top and the bottom border. This helps to determine where the sheet of paper was cut: if the mark is close to the top margin the sheet is cut at the top and vice versa. Irregularities are recorded, as they may be investigated in the future.

The second stage is the morphological analysis of the paper. The number of paper stocks is identified at stage one; thus a watermark sheet and its twin from each stock are examined. Descriptions include trimming, notes of thickness by touch (using terms such as 'thin' or 'thick', the only term used by paper merchants in describing the ream which they buy), number of chain lines per folio, measurements in millimetres of the distance between twenty laid lines and twenty gaps, and position of the watermark in respect to chain lines and borders; variant states of marks are noted (but a full examination is not carried out). The third stage will require the acquisition of reproductions, which will allow comparison of watermarks with other published instances of similar marks for dating purposes.

This method will have to be applied rigorously to the whole corpus of manuscripts, and once the investigation is complete it will be possible to discuss the implications for book production further. From the preliminary investigation carried out, there are some interesting scenarios which seem to confirm that paper between the end of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries was available in England in large quantities. There is evidence of single scribes using large amounts of paper to copy miscellaneous texts, that is to say one paper stock as exemplified by BL Add. 4698, Add. 12056, Add. 36791, and Sloane 2027. In other instances, several scribes work on a single paper stock on several subsequent quires perhaps in collaboration: for example, BL Add. 36983 and Sloane 5. There is also one example of two scribes who use different paper stocks, but never mix the paper within quires, in BL Add. 59678. It would be interesting as the project carries on to see whether any of these production patterns are found elsewhere in the corpus of manuscripts. Subsequent investigation may lead to mapping the use of paper in the West Midlands, provided that the manuscript was produced in these counties; indeed, the use of paper and its patterning might be a useful indicator of localization. It might be possible to start asking further questions about book production and the relationship between the material, the scribes, and the text. If any pattern of similar watermarks emerges in a group of manuscripts, a common origin for these patterns could be considered. Moreover, linguistic evidence could then be evaluated and consideration given to scribal collaboration in relationship to the place of production of a manuscript. The collaboration of scribes using a single paper stock raises additional questions about the locations of scribes at the

time of writing, and whether the paper was bought and parcelled out for several scribes to copy in different locations or whether they worked together in the same place.

The research questions which can be investigated once paper is analysed are numerous. The systematic application of the methodology, which has been outlined here, will help us to better understand the use of paper in book production. It will work as a control for potentially larger lines of enquiries. The final output of this project will be a searchable catalogue of paper manuscripts, which will include twenty images of watermarks. This method can be extended to other paper archival material, which constitutes an important comparative source for dating the paper. Research into medieval manuscripts is frequently hamstrung by lack of evidence about the date or provenance of a text. Paper may help to remedy this lack of evidence. Lyall explained: 'The introduction of paper transformed the book-trade, bringing the acquisition of manuscripts within the reach of a larger section of society than ever before and paving the way for the new technology of print. But it also provides codicologists with a vital, and so far largely neglected, tool, the possibilities of which are only now beginning to be understood.'³² We have now understood the full potential of paper as a manufactured product, but we need to collect and analyse the evidence to shed more light on the manuscripts themselves as physical artefacts. The textual, intellectual, and cultural issues that will emerge from such an investigation will go well beyond the numbers provided by catalogues and assist us in a fuller understanding of manuscript production in the late medieval period.³³

³² Lyall, 'Materials: The Paper Revolution', p. 26.

³³ I would like to thank Professors Wendy Scase and Elaine Traharne for reading this paper in draft and for their suggestions. I should also like to thank Dr Margaret M. Smith for her constant help and support at the initial stage of the project.

EPILOGUE

Derek Pearsall

Ever since the identification by nineteenth-century scholars of the West Midlands and north-west Midlands as the home of the great alliterative poems of the fourteenth century, the region has exercised a powerful attraction to scholars as a potential counterpoise to the dominant culture of the metropolis. The increased attention in the 1930s to the *Ancrene Wisse* and the 'Katherine Group' of texts after the identification of the AB dialect by J. R. R. Tolkien in 1929, the marvellous evocation by E. J. Dobson of the landscape and milieu of the *Ancrene Wisse* in 1976, and the emergence of *Lazamon* as a recognized major poet, and of Worcester as a major centre of scholarship, have all given fresh stimulus to interest in the region, albeit now to the south-west Midlands.¹ There have been many attempts to capture the special essence of this West Midlands culture, some driven by a clearly anti-metropolitan (and anti-French) bias, such as J. R. Hulbert's essay on the origins of the 'Alliterative Revival' (1931).² Of special importance were the two important essays by Elizabeth Salter on 'The Alliterative Revival' (1966–67) and a notably audacious book on the West Midlands as a medieval society (1966) by Rodney Hilton, who chose the hard task of trying to establish the existence of a vigorous regional culture on the basis of predominantly historical records.³

¹ J. R. R. Tolkien, 'Ancrene Wisse and Hali Meidhad', *Essays and Studies*, 14 (1929), 104–26; E. J. Dobson, *The Origins of Ancrene Wisse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976).

² James R. Hulbert, 'A Hypothesis Concerning the Alliterative Revival', *Modern Philology*, 28 (1931), 405–22.

³ Elizabeth Salter, 'The Alliterative Revival I', *Modern Philology*, 64.2 (1966), 146–50; Salter, 'The Alliterative Revival II', *Modern Philology*, 64.3 (1967), 233–37; R. H. Hilton, *A Medieval Society: The West Midlands at the End of the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966).

Literary scholars, provided they have access to reliable dialectological evidence, have a less daunting task.

So it was an inspired idea on the part of Wendy Scase, as the comparatively new professor of medieval English literature at Birmingham and the sponsor of a new research centre named after the two great Birmingham medieval scholars, Geoffrey Shepherd and Rodney Hilton, to summon a conference of scholars on the culture of the West Midlands and to concentrate on the evidence of that culture in manuscripts of West Midlands provenance. The bringing together of a strong interest in regional culture with a strong interest in the material manuscript evidences of that culture produced a lively response from a range of scholars and, now, a stimulating collection of essays.

Of course the definition of 'the West Midlands' has been allowed to be a generous one, even though nothing is allowed in from north of Staffordshire. The modern administrative district known as the 'West Midlands' is dominated by the Birmingham conurbation and is indeed little more than a name for Greater Birmingham. Wigmore Abbey seems a long way away. The region covered by this book (and by the census of West Midland manuscripts which Rebecca Farnham describes in one of the essays included here) comprises the six counties of Warwickshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Shropshire, and Staffordshire. But the generous geography is justifiable in terms of traditional understanding of the extent of the (south-) West Midlands, in terms of common dialectal features, and perhaps on the basis of the needs of a good conference. Whether the scholars who have contributed to this collection have come up with a conviction of the cultural identity of the region is one of the questions that makes one the more eager to read it.

In fact, what happens is that questions of regional cultural identity take second place to the demonstration of the importance of the study of material manuscript culture in all its manifestations. This is perhaps inevitable and to be welcomed, given the origins of the conference in its association with other large-scale manuscript-based projects, given the entirely admirable concentration in recent years throughout medieval literary scholarship on the study of material manuscript culture, and in the face of the perhaps rather old-fashioned nature and perceived impracticality of the search for regional 'cultural identity'.

It is striking, in connection with this idea of the 'impracticality' of such a search, that so many of the essays make a point of stressing the mobility of medieval manuscripts, the strong connections between regions, and the difficulties of talking about provenance without recognizing that dialect of origin may refer to the scribes but not necessarily to the provenance of the manuscripts they write.

Mary Swan, for instance, writing on Old English manuscript production in Worcester and the West Midlands, lays emphasis which has important implications for manuscript geography, adumbrated in the essays of Elizabeth Salter mentioned above, on the mobility of manuscripts and scribes, and suggests further, rather daringly, that some of Worcester's reputation as a centre of scholarly activity may reflect Worcester's successful self-publicity in tending to attract attributions away from, for instance, Hereford and Evesham. Bella Millett, writing on the Trinity and Lambeth homilies, draws attention to the cross-diocese links indicated by affiliations between the two sets of sermons, from the east Midlands and the West Midlands respectively. She also makes the important point that a principal audience for such sermons may have been cathedral canons and congregations. John J. Thompson, in one of the essays concentrating on BL, MS Harley 2253 and its contemporaries, complicates yet again the picture of regional cultural identity by stressing the cross-regional affiliations of manuscripts, and especially those between Harley 2253, along with its sister manuscripts copied by the same scribe, and the Hiberno-English MS Harley 913.

Moving into the fifteenth century, Ryan Perry has a study of the now-dispersed Clopton manuscript, exploring, with a richness of documentation made possible by the place of the manuscript among the well-recorded Beauchamp affinity, the transregional social and administrative networks that lie behind its very varied vernacular contents. Martha Driver, returning again to the theme of the 'mobility of the nobility', focuses on the Beauchamp-Neville family networks that can be deduced from the genealogical and heraldic rolls, especially the pictures in such rolls as the Beauchamp Pageants (BL, Cotton MS Julius E. IV). David Griffith, also writing on the Rous rolls (of which the Beauchamp roll is one), takes a different tack: he carries the story of the rolls up into post-medieval centuries, showing how the continued treasuring of the rolls was motivated by the desire to maintain the continuous sense of the family's pedigree rather than by mere antiquarianism. The study by Alison Wiggins of West Midlands manuscripts of romances again emphasizes the mobility of manuscripts and interests (the romance of Guy of Warwick, judging by the provenance of its known manuscripts, was popular everywhere, and not especially or at all in Warwickshire) and the importance this has for cultural geography and notions of regional cultural identity.

Not all the essays have to do with the questions of regional cultural identity that I have been tracing. Some, such as that of Elaine Treharne on the book-collecting of bishops in Worcester and Exeter, are concerned with the activities of particular patrons in promoting book production and collection, while two

very substantial and wide-ranging essays on Harley 2253, by Susanna Fein and Carter Revard, give a vivid picture of the scribe-compiler at work and in so doing throw light on the kind of audience that might have sustained cultural work such as this around Ludlow.

Part Four of the collection includes the account by Rebecca Farnham, already mentioned, of the making of the online catalogue of West Midlands manuscripts, which has already been importantly useful, for instance to Alison Wiggins in providing the evidence for West Midlands manuscripts of romance. It is useful also to Orietta Da Rold, for whom it provides a base for investigating the use of paper in late medieval manuscripts: the West Midlands, having had its claims to regional cultural identity somewhat banged about, here becomes the home of a representative sample.

The book follows out its two themes with admirable rigour and scholarship and may well provide a model for further exploration. It has to some extent been anticipated in the predominantly manuscript- and text-based work of Richard Beadle (1991) on East Anglia, of Jonathan Hughes (1989) and John Block Friedman (1995) on Yorkshire and the north, and of Ralph Hanna (2005) on London.⁴ (The Belfast project led by John Thompson on the 'Cultural Mapping' of the manuscripts of the *Brut* is not region-based.)⁵ Scotland, Ireland, and Wales have their own histories. Kent seems a likely subject for the future, and also Lincolnshire. There has been some work on both, and more will be stimulated by a book like this one.

⁴ Richard Beadle, 'Prolegomena to a Literary Geography of Later Medieval Norfolk', in *Regionalism in Late Medieval Manuscripts and Texts: Essays Celebrating the Publication of 'A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English'*, ed. by Felicity Riddy, York Manuscripts Conferences: Proceedings Series, 2 [Proceedings of the 1989 Conference] (Cambridge: Brewer, 1991), pp. 89–108; John B. Friedman, *Northern English Books, Owners, and Makers in the Late Middle Ages* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995); Jonathan Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries: Religion and Secular Life in Late Medieval Yorkshire* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1988); Ralph Hanna, *London Literature, 1300–1380* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

⁵ <<http://www.qub.ac.uk/imagining-history/wordpress/index.php>>.

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